

Spotlight

NEW FEATURE: RIDES FROM THE READERS

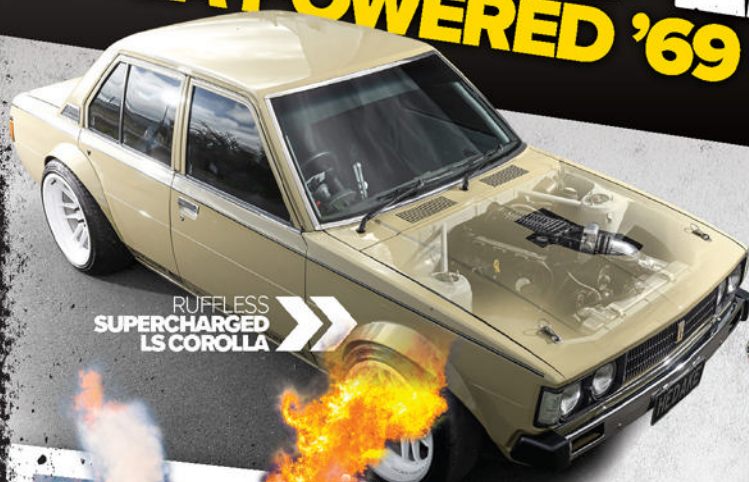


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MAY/JUN 2023
ISSUE 215

9



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ISSUE 215 • MAY/JUN 2023

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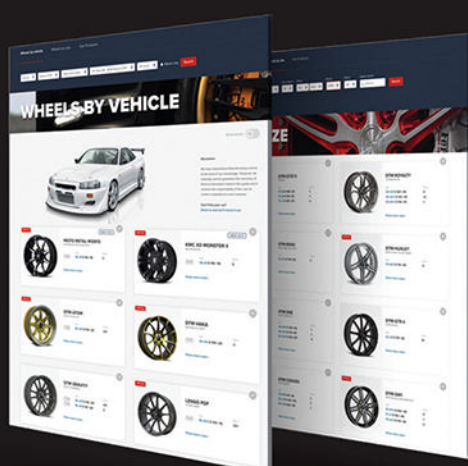


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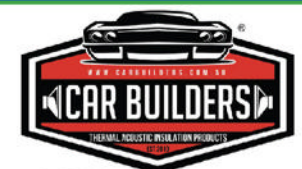
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**FROM
THE ED.**

**RIXSTA
SAMMONS**



GOOD TIMES AHEAD

Wow, these past few months have been great! That is, unless you live in Auckland or parts of the east coast, where Mother Nature dealt a nasty blow — I have a few friends who were hit hard by the storms, but they are soldiering on and doing their best to put the past two weeks of hell behind them. For myself, the two months that have passed since we last spoke have been quite eventful; I've done a lot of work on my car, attended a few car shows, and even made it to the drags to photograph the Wild Bunch cars at Masterton Motorplex. On the forecast for next month, in May, I'll be in Taupo for an event called Aussie Assault, which takes place at the Taupo Motorsport Park and features two days of roll racing, burnouts, show 'n' shine, and track cruising with your friends.

I've attended this event before (this will be my fourth time), but each time I always trailered my car up with my ute, so I had that safeguard of 'if it breaks'. This year is a little different; I'm doing the five-hour road trip from my home town of Upper Hutt to Taupo, and to throw in a curve ball, I'm towing a trailer with my main car instead of towing the car with my ute — yup, I'm driving up in full drag-week style. I've driven my car up once before (maybe the second time I attended), but never with a trailer, and it was bloody awesome, so I wanted to do it again. The reason for the trailer is that, firstly, I'm taking my son, who is in a wheelchair (story for another time), but I needed to find a way to get it there as it won't fit inside the car, so that's where the trailer idea comes from.

It needs some work to get it to where I want it — fully enclosed — which I have a month to do. Fun fact: I'm a coach builder by trade, so fabrication is my strong point, and I'll get it wrapped up in time. Along with that, there is a bit of maintenance that's needed on my car in order to make the trip. Modified cars love to do dumb modified shit, so a full overhaul, nut-and-bolt check, and some new fluids, and it should be good to go — fingers crossed.

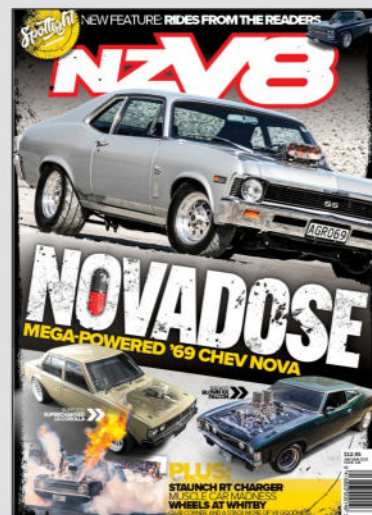
Moving forward, what does this issue cover? Well, the roster is impressive, and I'm proud to have played a major role in getting it there. Since my role as editor at NZV8 now encompasses

more than just the photography, I have to depend largely on the rest of the Dream Team to take care of the photo shoots so that I can focus on other aspects of the magazine's layout. With the new bimonthly magazine, I have more time on my hands, and it feels great to get back into the swing of things in terms of taking photographs of cars.

The first is a mega-powered '69 Chev Nova, which is an absolute powerhouse, producing 800hp or more — what a machine, right? The DX Corolla and the XA Falcon are mine — two awesome shoots that went off without a hitch and two absolutely insane cars. Take a look — these are some awesome Kiwi street machines. We also have one slick, spotless RT Charger. It's too good for you Mopar fans to miss. Coverage of Muscle Car Madness and Wheels at Whitby are two more great events that are stacked with V8 goodness and great yarns behind them, so check them out.

While there is a feast of Kiwi favourites and something for everyone, there are two features that I've personally put a lot of time and effort into: Club Corner and Readers' Rides. While Cam County and the crew behind Port Road Drags made their Club Corner debut last month, this month we head south to visit New Zealand's oldest hot rod club (Rod Benders Inc. from Christchurch), and what a story they had to tell! The other new Readers' Rides feature is focused on YOU — the readers and your vehicles. While NZV8 always has main feature cars that are some of the best in New Zealand, I wanted to highlight some awesome daily drivers or weekend warriors that still have street cred, and they deserve to be mentioned in these pages. We have four reader rides in this issue, each with a cool story to tell. And if you, yes, YOU the reader, have a cool streeter or hot rod in your garage and want to share your story with me, I would love to hear it, so please reach out — send me an email! Anyway, I'll get to work on building this trailer, and I hope you enjoy this issue of NZV8. Take care, stay classy, keep it simple but significant, and I'll catch you next time. **V8**

Rixsta Sammons



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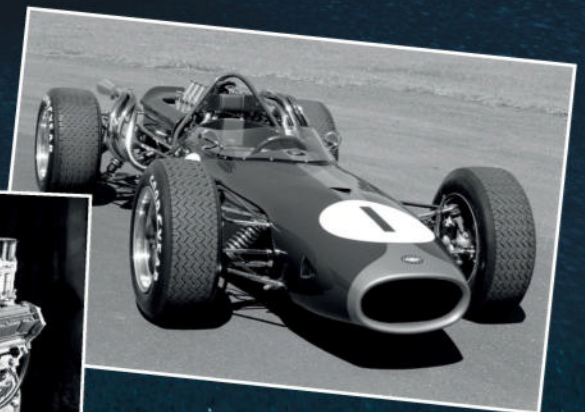
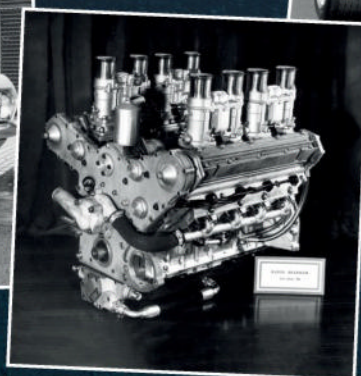
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Z06 NEWS HAS A STING FOR KIWI FANS

WORDS: RICHARD BOSSELMAN

TORCH Red exterior offset by metallic black racing stripes, as well as 20-inch and 21-inch Spider design forged black wheels; black interior with red seat belts ... oh yes, and just 15 miles (24 kilometres) on the odometer. Noice, noice, noice.

And it sold at auction in Kissimmee, Florida, recently for an eye-widening US\$275,000 (just under NZ\$435k). What made the 2023 Corvette Z06 worth more than three times its list price in the United States was that ... well, it was a 2023 Corvette Z06 that was available.

The demand for the first of the fully 'performance' models in the C8 range in its home country is astounding. Some folk well down the waiting list but also well-heeled enough to see that as being nothing more than a hindrance seem set to pay ANYTHING to secure one now rather than in, say, a year or so. The Kissimmee price was just the latest. It wasn't actually a pinnacle. So far the highest amount paid to secure an example was paid in December. The GM Authority website reported on a new Z06 Coupe with 25 miles on the clock and an asking price of US\$375k (NZ\$593k). That's a

jaw-dropping 251 per cent price increase over recommended retail, which, in turn, is almost 50 per cent higher than Stateside pricing for the cheapest Corvette Stingray.

So there's money to be made, as long as money can be spent. Which isn't the case in New Zealand. Not yet.

Two weeks ago General Motors Speciality Vehicles, the factory-appointed distributorship for Corvette and Silverado, announced it had landed the first right-hand drive Z06. The car, pictured here, resides at the regional head office in Melbourne and will undertake promotional duties. The outfit's release about this, and subsequent news stories out of Australia about expectation of Z06 becoming available for customer delivery from later this year, naturally triggered interest on this side of the Tasman about when it was coming and for how much.

Questions, as it transpires, that are more easily answered in Australia than here.

That media announcement is a false start here — the distributor's NZ arm quickly explained it will not take orders and is dissuading dealers from

accepting down payments. It's not even 100 per cent clear if the derivative will ultimately join the small cache of officially distributed C8 Stingrays in circulation. GMSV NZ's spokesman said there's no clarity about the Z06's NZ allocation and, until that's sorted, there's no idea when it will come... or how much it will cost. Because of that, it isn't prepared to accept customer cash. "GMSV is advising our dealers they should not take any deposits," a spokesman said. As for availability? "This information isn't available at this stage but will be released when we receive details regarding our allocation." In sporting a competition-tuned flat plane 5.5-litre V8 which generates 500kW and 624Nm in North America, Z06 stands as the line's kick-off kingpin, though as said that status might only last until 2025. That's the likely arrival date for the electric-assisted e-Ray — cited as the fastest Corvette yet and also New Zealand-confirmed. That landmark model, in turn, stands to be gazumped in time by an ultimate old-schooler, a new-generation ZR1, which is intended to sport a turbocharged edition of the Z06 mill, making 596kW. The situation



with Z06 is a reminder that Corvette has not been any easy car to secure in NZ. For various reasons, the renowned Bowling Green Plant in Kentucky, United States, has so far only been able to drip feed this country. In addition to GM having to contend with the usual coronavirus-associated travails affecting almost all the world's car producers, the famous factory was smashed by a tornado. Though NZ-market pricing was announced in April 2021, almost two years after the C8 was confirmed as the first factory-built right-hand drive model, it took until October that year before the first example landed. It is still retained as a brand-owned demonstrator. The first C8 into NZ customer hands, a 3LT coupe, was delivered two months later. Four cars were registered by end of 2021. Since then, it appears GMSV has fulfilled the original allocation of four C8 Stingrays for each of the seven national dealerships: 28 cars. It has also has two fleet cars, used for evaluation and media driving. Registration statistics show GMSV NZ provisioned 33 cars for all of 2022.

The NZ C8 Stingray range spans 2LT and 3LT coupe and convertibles, plus a smattering of launch special Carbon Editions, all with a 370kW/637Nm 6.2-litre V8 paired to an eight-speed dual-clutch automatic driving the rear wheels. GMSV has steered clear of discussing the state of the C8 order bank and if any orders placed when the car was first announced have yet to be fulfilled. By the end of last year, C8 Stingray list pricing uniformly rose by \$15,000, taking the entry 2LT Coupe from \$154,990 to \$170,000 — as much as was originally asked for the 3LT Coupe, which in turn jumped to \$185k.

The Australasian spec is based on the top-of-the-range grade available in the US, known as 3LZ. Standard features are expected to include a carbon-fibre-accented steering wheel, carbon-fibre shift paddles, microfibre interior accents, leather-wrapped interior door and instrument panels, and 'GT2' bucket seats with Nappa leather upholstery.

E-Ray was revealed on 18 January and GMSV here quickly asserted the intention is to sell it. But the spokesman says there's still nothing additional to be said about the battery-involved derivative, including expressions of Kiwi interest in the car that, as well as being the first with electric is also (because of that) the first all-wheel-drive Corvette. This is by virtue of using the electric motor to run the front wheels while the V8 feeds the backs.

With 0-100kmh in 2.5 seconds claimed, e-Ray is the fastest accelerating production Corvette. The 120kW front-mounted electric motor and mid-set 370kW LT2 6.2-litre naturally-aspirated V8 provide 482kW in total — falling slightly short of the C8 Z06 on power and the C7 ZR1 — yet it is quicker than both to the legal open road limit. The C8 Z06's outputs for here might be lower than for the US, as the car coming here is missing the centre-mounted quad exit exhaust system of domestic editions. Instead it has a system closer to the Corvette Stingray, with two exhaust pipes on either side of the rear bumper. That system is understood to have an emissions-busting petrol particulate filter, in order to meet strict European emission standards (Euro 6d).

It is also likely fitted to help meet European and Australian vehicle noise rules, which are stricter than those in the US.



BORN-AGAIN AC COBRA GETS SUBTLE DESIGN TWEAKS, 654HP SUPERCHARGED V8

**THIS COBRA GT ROADSTER IS EVEN OFFERED
WITH A SIX-SPEED MANUAL TRANSMISSION**

England-based AC Cars has kept its promise of unveiling a modern take on the emblematic Cobra. While it looks unmistakably like the original model, the new roadster features a handful of visual updates, an aluminium chassis and a V8 engine rated at 654 horsepower.

We know what you're thinking: "Isn't that a Shelby?" The answer is both yes and no. Shelby popularised the Cobra and later made it an icon on and off the track but it didn't create it. The roadster started life in England as the straight-six-powered AC Ace, which explains why the British firm can resurrect the basic design and proportions without summoning a dark cloud of disapproval from Shelby's legal team.

Back to the road: called Cobra GT Roadster, the modern-day two-seater is entirely new in spite of its retro design. Computer-generated images published by the company suggest that the list of updates includes LED lights on both ends, modern-looking door mirrors, twin exhaust tips integrated into a diffuser, and bigger wheels. Most of the bright trim has been removed for a cleaner, more contemporary look.

AC Cars stuffed a Ford-sourced, 5-litre V8 between the bulged fenders. Related to the engine that powers the Mustang, among other

models, it's supercharged to develop 654 horsepower and 575 pound/feet of torque, and it spins the rear wheels via either a six-speed manual transmission or a 10-speed automatic. Hitting 62mph from a stop takes around 3.4 seconds, and top speed checks in at 173mph. AC notes that the Cobra GT weighs about 3,100 pounds thanks in part to an aluminium chassis developed specifically for the car.

Interior photos haven't been released yet. We're told that the driver will face an analogue instrument cluster with a 'digital glass' display, and that the cabin was designed with ergonomics in mind. This version of the Cobra should offer far more interior space than older models, and the list of standard equipment will include power-operated windows, a climate control system, and an infotainment system with navigation.

AC Cars will fully unveil the Cobra GT Roadster in April 2023, and it will take the model on a European tour in the subsequent months. The first deliveries are scheduled for 2024, and pricing starts at £285,000 including tax, a figure which represents approximately \$342,000 at the current conversion rate. As of this writing, there's no word on whether the rebooted Cobra will compete against Shelbys in the United States.



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EDITOR'S PICK

6-7 May 2023 **Aussie Assault 2023**

Taupo International Motorsport Park, Taupo

Choice Events and Promotions host one of the baddest Aussie-powered vehicle events in NZ, open to all Holdens, Fords, and Valiants. Two days of cruising, roll racing, grip session, burnouts, and show 'n' shine. Entries are open and limited to the first 400 entries only. The entry fee includes vehicle and one driver entry. No WoF? No reg? No cert? No worries! This is a racetrack but your car must pass a safety check before being able to go out on the track, and this includes but is not limited to having a secure battery, working brake lights, safety belts or harnesses up to standard, and undergoing a fuel and wiring system inspection etc. For more info: www.choiceevents.co.nz.



04

01

8 April 2023

NZ Holden Nationals Show Day

Fly Palmy Arena, 61 Pascal Street, Palmerston North

Hosted by Holden Club Central, there will be over 100 Holdens from 1950 to the present on show. You'll see stock, modified, and special interest Holdens. Entry is \$5 adult, \$10 family pass, under 12s free. For more info: www.holdenclubcentral.co.nz.

02

22 April 2023

Repco Rev Up Whangarei 2023

Cameron Street Mall, Whangarei

A car and motorcycle show in Whangarei CBD, hosted by Whangarei Rod & Custom Club. Live rock 'n' roll music, pin-up girl comp, spot prizes, cash draws, and much more. Limited number of entries for cars and bikes. This is a fundraiser for Whangarei Community Patrol. On Sunday it's the combined clubs' swap meet and car show at Heritage Park, Maunu, Whangarei, so why not make a weekend of it?

For Rev Up entry and info go to: www.revupwhangarei.co.nz.

03

28-30 April 2023

Cruz'n the Bayz

Bay of Islands

Friday starts with a run from Waitangi to Kawakawa, via Opuā, then on through Moerewa to Kaikohe, and back to Paihia where there will be night cruising. Saturday is a poker run to Whangaroa Harbour, via a Mātāuri Bay loop, Kaeo, Kerikeri, and return to Paihia for more local entertainment, market stalls, and night cruising. Sunday has the option of driving to Russell via the Opuā ferry, or using the walk-on ferries from Russell. Back at HQ Waitangi Sports Grounds there will be a barbecue comp, Miss '60s Diva pageant, prize-giving, and a draw for a trip for two to Rarotonga with flights and accommodation.

For more info contact: Roz (021) 0293 9205.

06

07

05

SOUTH ISLAND



03

02

04

01

1 April 2023

05 Muscle Mania

Gore Town and Country Club, 9 Bury Street, Bury

Southern Aussie Muscle Car Club presents Muscle Mania, which is open to Australian designed or manufactured vehicles — Ford, Valiants, and Holdens. Food stalls, live music, and a mystery cruise from 1.30pm. Registrations open from 10-11am with \$10 registration per car. Gold coin entry. For more info contact: Mary-Anne (027) 234 9195.

7 - 9 April 2023

06 Wheels at Wanaka

Sir Tim Wallis Drive, Three Parks, Wanaka

An all vehicle, all machinery, 'history-in-motion' vintage fair that features steam engines, motorbikes, trucks, earthmovers, and heavy machinery. The biggest all-vehicle show in Australasia, there's over 50 acres of entertainment, tractor/truck pulling, Enduro X dirt bike competitions, ATV and electric rally car demos, an earthmoving extravaganza, and a non-stop parade ground programme. Register your head-turning wheels, buy tickets, and learn more at: www.wheelsatwanaka.co.nz.

07



EDITOR'S PICK

21-23 April 2023

Festival of Speed

Highlands, Corner SH6 and Sandflat Road, Cromwell

The Highlands Festival of Speed returns for 2023 with an amazing selection of historic and classic vehicles battling it out on the world-class Highlands circuit.

The Festival of Speed is renowned as one of the most popular classic events in New Zealand for both competitors and spectators. Two days of New Zealand's best racing with an amazing selection of historic and classic vehicles battling it out. It's a weekend packed with some of the best modern classic racing you will see in New Zealand. Featuring

Mainland Muscle, Formula Libre, HVRA, VCC, M Developments Sprint Series, Highlands Modern Classics, and Highlands Nostalgic Classics.

For more info: www.highlands.co.nz.

TRICK & TREAT

THIS MEGA-POWERED SMALL-TYRE STREETER IS AN ENGINEERING MASTERPIECE IN DISGUISE!

WORDS: TODD WYLIE PHOTOS: LIAM DIJK

Jamie Waugh is a man who knows his cars. He's owned more than a few tough blown streeters in his time and a few Italian exotics too. While the vehicles are different in almost every way, they have one thing in common: horsepower and plenty of it. Of course, the power and driving experience they offer is delivered in vastly different ways, but Jamie loves them equally.

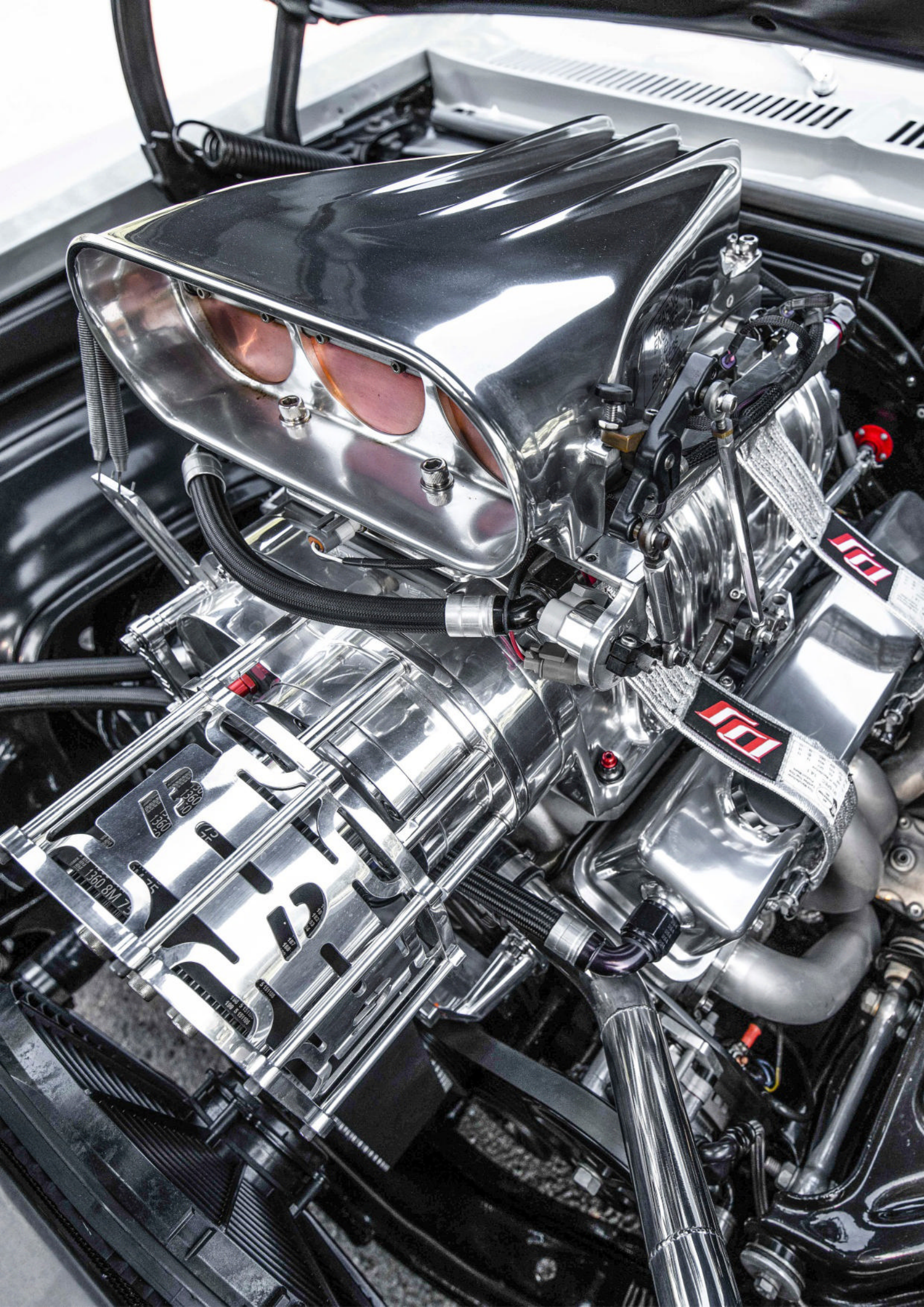
Having grown up around the Auckland car scene in the early 2000s, he knows all the right people to build impressive cars of his own. One of those contacts was legendary engine builder and drag racer Mike Gearing. Mike was the go-to guy for big horsepower right up till his retirement only a handful of years ago, when he sold the last of his tools to his protégé Reece Fish.

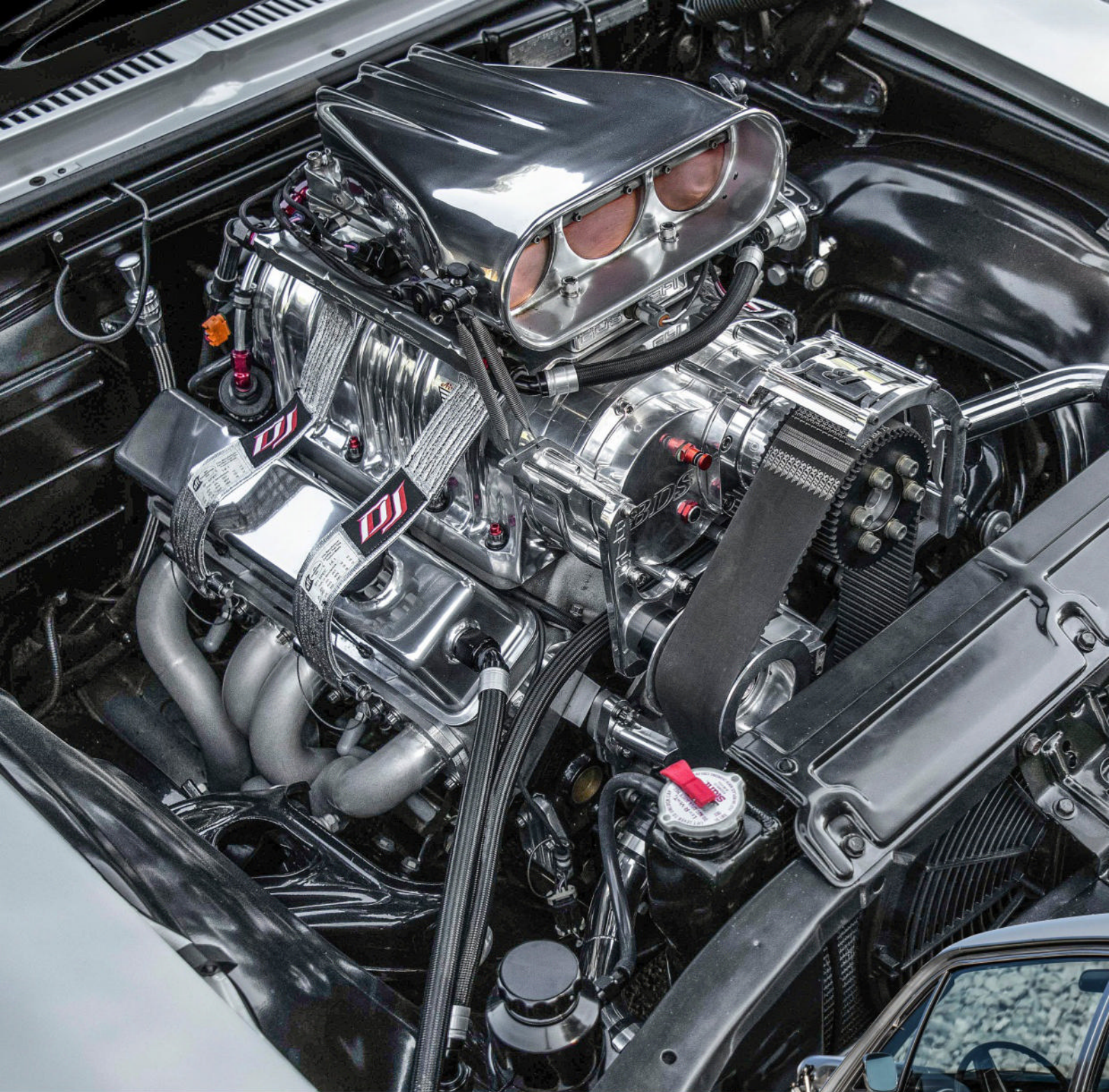
Having always wanted Mike to build a motor for him, Jamie hatched a plan to get in before Mike wound down. Sure, he had no car to put an engine into, but when you've got a limited opportunity to have a legend like Mike work on your stuff, you don't let a minor issue like not having a car stop you.

"I wanted a motor that looked like it was based on an early '60s FED [front-engine dragster] motor," states Jamie. "Initially, I was thinking of having Rods by Reid build a '32 to put it in, but with two kids, that wasn't going to work, and, of course, it would be too wild in a car that light."

So, with the car Mike's engine would go into still unknown, Jamie pressed on to have his dream engine built. >







While it would have been easy to opt for a big block, huge capacity was never the goal, but keeping weight down and building something that could rev highly and create plenty of power for the street was. With that in mind, Jamie ordered a Dart Little M block to base the build on. JE pistons, H-beam rods, a forged steel crank, and ARP fasteners were fitted — the engine displaces 400ci. While the capacity could have been stretched further, Mike said that wouldn't be necessary. His reassuring words were, "it'll be stout at 400".

With decades of high-performance experience, Mike knew all the tricks and the right parts to use for the top end. The key components were Edelbrock Victor Jr 23-degree heads, which were heavily ported and fitted with roller lifters pushed up by a custom-spec Comp Cams camshaft.

While some of the engine specs are proprietary to Mike and Jamie, what they've done with the induction is in plain view. There was more than just old-school appeal behind the decision to fit



SPEC

1969 CHEVROLET NOVA SS 396

ENGINE: 400ci small block Chev; Dart Little M block; JE pistons; steel crank; six-inch H-beam rods; custom sump; ported Edelbrock Victor Jr 23-degree heads; roller lifters; Comp Cams cam; Jessel shaft rockers; Enderle Nostalgia hat converted to EFI; BDS AirLock Stage 2, 6-71 supercharger; BDS fuel rails; Holley fuel pump; Holley fuel-pressure regulator (FPR); MSD Digital 7 ignition; FAST ECU; Fast crank trigger; custom headers; twin three-inch exhausts; custom sump; crank scraper

DRIVELINE: Rossler TH400 transmission, reverse-pattern manual valve body, Pro Torque 3200rpm billet stall converter, transbrake, line lock, JW bellhousing, TCI flex plate, Strange nine-inch, Strange S-trac LSD, Strange 35-spline axles

SUSPENSION: CalTracs springs, adjustable shocks, CalTracs mono-leaf rear springs, CalTracs bars, Solid Energy sway bars

BRAKES: Hydroboost, Wilwood master cylinder, Wilwood callipers, Wilwood discs

WHEELS/TYRES: 15x6-inch and 15x9-inch Weld Racing wheels, 275/60R15 Mickey Thompson tyres

EXTERIOR: Factory-correct Glasurit Cortez Silver paint, factory-correct black underbody paint

CHASSIS: Modified front cross-member, custom engine mounts

INTERIOR: Procar bucket seats, full retrim, TCI shifter, Auto Meter gauges

PERFORMANCE: 800-plus horsepower, 800-plus pound-foot on pump gas

an Enderle Nostalgia injection hat, because it allowed the intake set-up to sit much lower than a carb would have. The valuable space this saves was critical to keep the engine package under the required height when it eventually made its way through LVV certification. Cleverly, the hat was converted from mechanical injection to EFI using BDS fuel rails, which feed in pump gas above the BDS AirLock Stage 2, 6-71 supercharger. With all its polished components and the attention to detail that makes the engine look so right, it wouldn't have mattered if the engine sat around on display for years before Jamie found a car to drop it into.

That didn't end up happening though. While the engine was being built, Jamie immediately began the hunt for the right body. He'll be the first to admit that he's picky. It had to be the right car to meet his vision and high expectations. Wanting something mid-size, a first-generation Camaro was the obvious choice. However, when a genuine 1969 Nova SS 396 came up for sale wearing just 5400 recorded miles, well, he knew he had to have it. The car hadn't been purchased by a collector and stuck in a museum; it had been bought by a racer off the showroom floor, and those 5000 miles had mainly been on dragstrips around California. So the numbers-matching 396 big block was gone, but the car came complete with a 498-cube set-up that had reportedly pushed the Nova to 10.4-second passes at the Sacramento Raceway. However, what really got Jamie's attention was the state of the body. Sure, it was sunburnt, but it was utterly rust-free, uncut, unrepainted — a dream find. The fact that it weighed 660 pounds lighter than a similar-age Camaro was a bonus. ➤

IT WAS UTTERLY RUST-FREE,
UNCUT, UNREPAIRED — A DREAM FIND





Before long, the big block was sold off and work begun to prep the body for the shiny new — more powerful — small block combo. Drag racing legend Terry 'Chassisman' Bowden was enlisted to help with this part of the process, and, while there wasn't much chassis work required, his workmanship is very evident under the car.

The design philosophy was to build a car that vaguely looked like it had been built in '69 using only bolt-on parts, which meant no shell cutting. Sure, this would restrict what size wheels and tyres the car could run, but with Terry's knowledge, that didn't necessarily mean a lack of traction. Thanks to the competitive world of leaf-spring drag racing, off-the-shelf CalTracs split mono-leaf springs could be purchased as a bolt-in item. These springs, combined with CalTracs

bars and eight-way adjustable shocks, give the car a trick suspension set-up without requiring extensive fabrication. The front end was upgraded with matching shocks, CalTracs coilovers, and replacement bushes.

No new parts were bolted on until the entire underside of the car was painted. Although not working as a car painter these days, Jamie is a painter by trade, so he took care of this himself, taking the underside back to bare metal on a rotisserie and going as far as finding the factory-correct shade of black to apply.

Once Jamie was happy with the factory-finish appearance, the drivetrain was fitted for the first time. The engine needed to be dropped down a few inches from stock, so Terry again helped, fitting the motor in nice and low. The team from C&M Performance were >

THE DESIGN PHILOSOPHY WAS TO BUILD A CAR THAT VAGUELY LOOKED LIKE IT HAD BEEN BUILT IN '69 USING ONLY BOLT-ON PARTS





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also heavily involved with the build fabrication, creating custom headers and exhaust systems, among many other fab jobs.

The transmission was straightforward enough — Jamie went straight to the top and purchased a brand-new Rossler TH400 filled with a reverse-pattern manual valve body and a Pro Torque 3200rpm billet converter. The rear end was built equally as tough by Tim and the crew at Kryslar Shop to measurements supplied by Terry. Based on a custom housing, the diff runs a Strange nine-inch head with S-trac LSD, Strange 35-spline axles, and a large bearing housing.

With components like this, it's obvious that Jamie likes to do things right, regardless of how much time, effort, or money is required. So, naturally, the braking system follows this ethos, with Wilwood components used throughout.





**YOU'D NEVER GUESS THAT THE CAR WAS PAINTED BY JAMIE
IN HIS GARAGE, RATHER THAN BY A HIGH-END PAINTER**



Getting the interior up to Jamie's desired spec took time and perseverance. It was a factory bench-seat car, but he wanted buckets fitted. That is easy enough to achieve, but Jamie wanted to use factory-like vinyl material on the new seats. Trying to find the factory-correct vinyl from 1969 wasn't easy, and although he did find some, he then had to convince the supplier to sell it to him — it only wanted to sell completed seats. Jamie persisted, and, eventually, the fabric arrived so that his Procar seats could be retrimmed. While the stock steering wheel was retained, the rest of the interior isn't exactly factory, with a bunch of Auto Meter gauges and a TCI shifter taking pride of place, complete with a line-lock button. Jamie also took the precaution of installing a built-in fire-suppression system.

The team at C&M had the car running by this time, with all the fabrication and mechanical work absolutely flawless, but the car's bodywork remained in its original sunburnt state. With it looking so original, Jamie was torn between >





THE WHOLE PROJECT... TOOK FIVE LONG YEARS, NOT INCLUDING THE TIME SPENT BUILDING THE MOTOR

leaving it that way or biting the bullet and bringing the exterior up to the same level as the rest. Eventually, he succumbed to peer pressure and accepted the new-paint challenge. He stripped it back to bare metal like the underside and repainted it himself. The result? You'd never guess that the car was painted by Jamie in his garage, rather than by a high-end painter with professional booth facilities — the finish he's achieved is that good.

The whole project of getting the car, undertaking the work, and getting it on the road took five long years, not including the time spent building the motor. It's been a long journey, but, thanks to his attention to detail and desire to get things right at all costs, it's been a very rewarding experience.

The car drives fantastically, and with C&M-sorted tuning, there's no shortage of power. That said, there's still the option to switch it from pump gas to E85 for even more power, should it be needed.

Jamie's achieved everything he set out to do, but there's a lingering question, will he run the Nova down the quarter-mile? He'd be bold to risk damaging it when it looks as good as this. However, he's not ruling it out — after all, that was part of the original plan.

Either way, whether Jamie decides to race it or not, this is one Nova that's tough to beat. **V8**

DRIVER

JAMIE WAUGH

AGE: 50

OCCUPATION: Car painter

PREVIOUSLY OWNED CARS: 429 Cobra Jet-powered AC Cobra, blown '72 Buick Skylark, various Holdens, blown VE Commodore, Ferrari F430, Ferrari Carbon-spec 458 Italia (current)

DREAM CAR: The 1955 two-door Delray I'm currently building

WHY THE NOVA? I built the engine first, then found a car for it

BUILD TIME: Five years

LENGTH OF OWNERSHIP: Five years

JAMIE THANKS: Carl and AJ at C&M Performance, Mike Gearing, Dave Tout at Ultra Paints, Chuck's Restoration Supplies, Tim at Pro Coat, Aaron MacGillivray at Manco Engineering, Terry Bowden, Scott Tercel at ST Autobodyes, Leslie and Grant at Paeroa Upholstery, Tim at Kryslar Shop, Larry at Classic Cover



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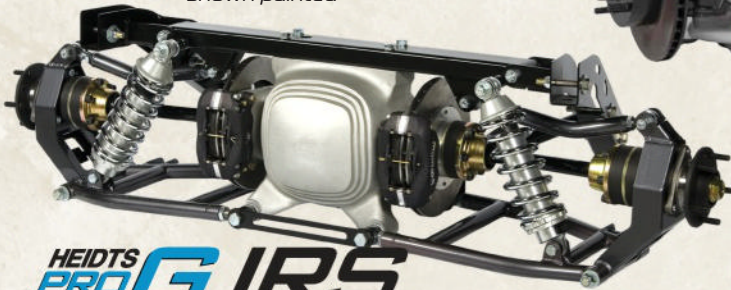
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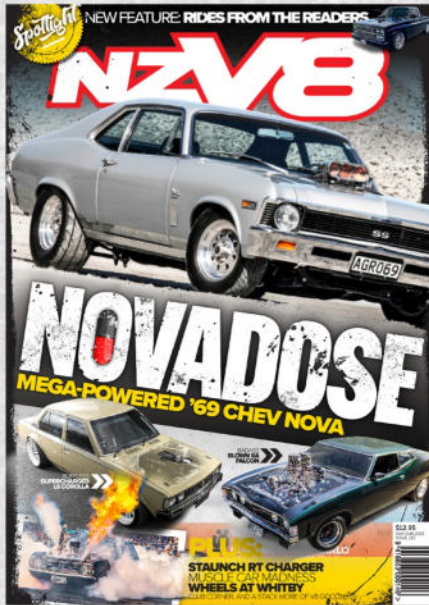
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SUMMERTIME *Antics*

MUSCLE CAR MADNESS, THE SOUTH ISLAND'S PREMIER CAR SHOW, IS BACK FOR ITS 33RD YEAR, AND IT STILL DELIVERS ON ITS NAME

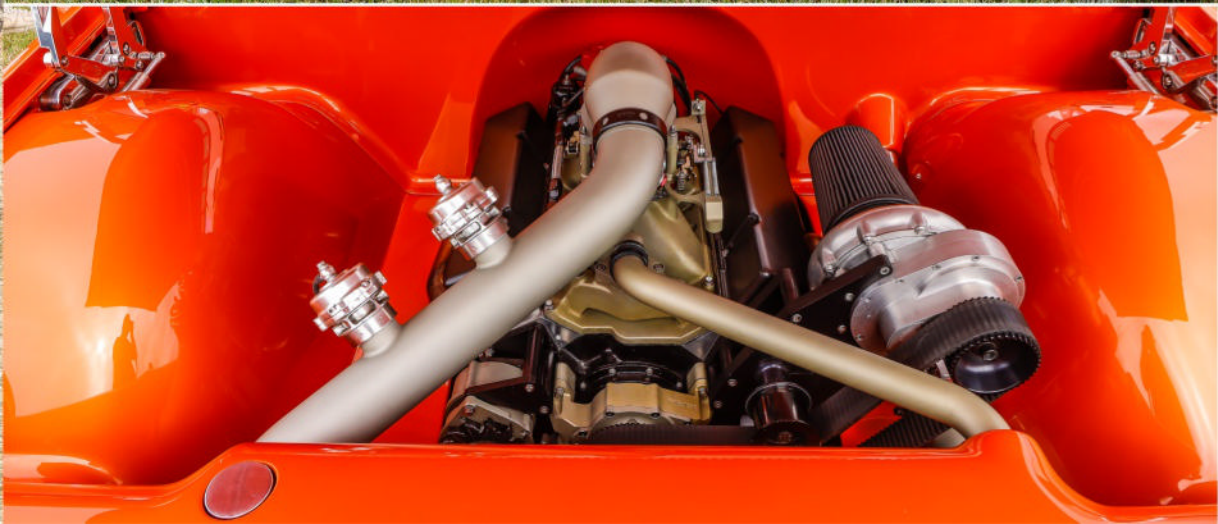
WORDS AND PHOTOS: ROD DUNN

Rangiora is a small town that lies about 30km north of Christchurch. The thriving town serves the horticultural and agricultural community, just like the many small rural towns scattered throughout New Zealand. Thirty-three years ago, one man had an idea to run a show in the car park of a local supermarket. Jumping ahead to 2023, we are sure that the organiser of that original show had no idea he would still be running that event all these years later. The show may have grown in size over the years, and he may have developed a lot more grey hair, but Craig Stare has created an event that

has almost taken on a life of its own and has become the mainstay of the Canterbury car scene.

Now, don't get us wrong — Muscle Car Madness (MCM) isn't just a celebration of the muscle car for locals; it's a drawcard for people from all over New Zealand, as well as offshore. Celebrating its 33rd year on 28 and 29 January this year, there was a number of people there who had attended every one of those 33 events, starting with the first, which had around 70 entries. And talking with a lot of those who keep coming back, there are a number of families now taking part with three generations in attendance. ➤



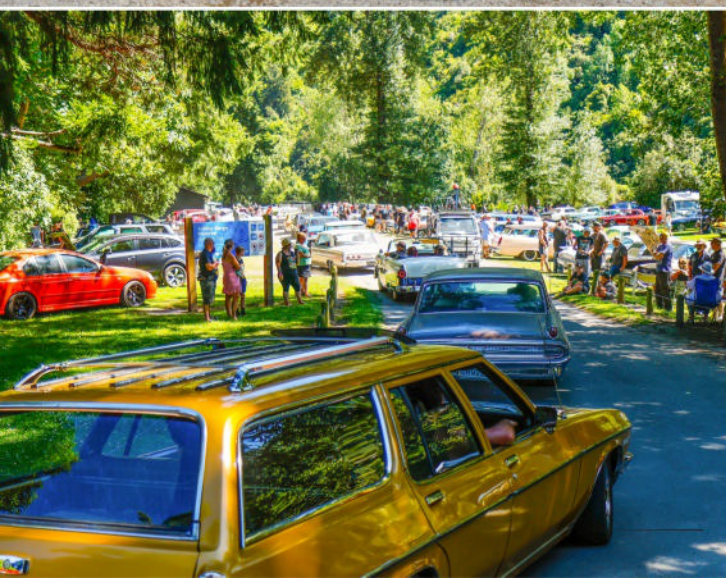


It was great to see Matt Elliott and his beautifully built 1979 Chev C10 truck. The ex-NZV8 magazine feature truck was on display and drew a steady stream of onlookers all weekend. Having seen the article on the truck, seeing it in the metal was next level. The paint and interior were simply breathtaking, and that engine bay ... wow. The C10 is powered by a 383 Chev wearing a ProCharger D1R supercharger, which is backed by a TH350 trans. Out the back is a GM 12-bolt rear, and the whole truck rides on airbags



As in previous years, things got underway on Wednesday morning, with keen campers parking up next to the showgrounds waiting for the gates to open at 6pm. It's a long wait for many, but that's the price you pay to stake claim on your piece of real estate for the weekend. There was the odd person who didn't have the patience to wait and simply made a beeline for their usual spot with stakes and rope in hand. Once the gates were thrown open, one can only describe it as organised chaos, as people descended on the grounds, invading the field and staking claim to an area that would become home for the next four days.

Thursday is usually set-up day. Tents are erected, pools are filled — yes, that is correct, some have inflatable pools on-site — chairs and tables set up, chilly bins are stocked, ice is collected, and supplies are put away. Friday was hot, and we mean *hot*! A number of entrants took the opportunity to take part in the usual Friday cruise to the Ashley Gorge. Many hit the water — maybe not quite in the same way as event organiser Craig did, but many took to the water to stay cool. ➤





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DUST WAS CERTAINLY THE ORDER OF THE DAY... KEEN ENTRANTS WERE HAPPY TO RIP AROUND THE PADDOCK



We just loved this 1932 Ford sports coupe owned by Oamaru rodders Geoff and Jan Omnet. Imported from the US as a rusting four-cylinder relic, a lot of work has gone into making it what you see here. The engine is a one-off, hand-built, 509ci V8 built by Shafiroff Racing in New York delivering 550hp. A Tremec TKO five-speed sits behind the engine, sending the power to a V12 Jag diff. Heidts tubular A-arms are fitted to the front. The paint colour is called 'Octane', a Ford Performance colour, while the roof has been covered with a BMW beige-coloured fabric. The interior is covered in chocolate-coloured leather

While this group was enjoying the relaxation of the park-like settings, another took to the paddock of Ben Winter at Sefton, who runs the annual Rust 'N' Dust event. Dust was certainly the order of the day, as hot and dry as it was, and these keen entrants were happy to rip around the paddock track while enjoying the hospitality of the Winter clan.

With just two events during the Friday, it was very quiet back at camp according to the few remaining souls, who were content to simply kick back for the day.

Saturday is the big day for MCM. The sky was overcast

and showers were predicted for the morning. But the first part of the morning turned out great, with the cooler temperatures a welcome relief from the previous day. The showers arrived mid-morning but didn't scare anyone off. People simply moved under cover or just tolerated the wet stuff while still viewing the car display. As the afternoon arrived, so did more persistent showers, so the decision was made to move the Retro Rockabilly Pageant indoors. This drew a large crowd, some keen to see the ladies strutting their stuff, while a few were there to get out of the rain. >



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Another very cool ride that was on display thanks to a North Island visitor was this 1972 Austin 1100. Named 'BADBMC', the Austin is a little different from when it left the factory. Built to skid, power is now supplied by a 383ci V8, topped with a Victor tunnel ram and Hamptons 6-71 blower wearing a pair of 650 Holley carbs. The engine is putting out around 650hp on a soft tune. A Powerglide trans sends the power to a narrowed nine-inch diff. A narrowed Torana front end sits in a custom-built chassis



As the showers continued throughout the afternoon, the hard decision was made to cancel the burnout comp. As disappointing as that was, it was made purely on the grounds of safety, and was met with approval by most. One of the things that was very noticeable to organisers was the fact that the crowds didn't leave this year because of the rain — they hung around, found cover when they needed to, and simply kept walking the rows of cars and stalls as though the sun was out.

Gates closed to the public around 5pm, but that didn't mean things came to an end, oh no, they continued with a vengeance. Live music in the pavilion, no end of cruising, and just soaking up the atmosphere — excuse the pun.

Sunday was once again warm, with some high cloud about that soon burnt off over the course of the morning. Display car numbers were down a little on Saturday, but that's not unusual. The big crowd draw ➤





Technically, it's not a car, but it is sitting on a car floor pan and suspension and is powered by a Toyota Starlet engine, so close enough. Pictured here with owner Sam Adkins, the train was originally built by his grandmother in Christchurch in the 1960s and did Santa parades in New Brighton and company picnics. It was eventually gifted to an orphanage in Christchurch after the family were done with it. It then bounced around a few different circus groups over the years before being left to sit in a field at McLeans Island, unloved and uncared for. It disappeared in the 2000s, and, by luck, Sam located it in May 2022 sitting in the Greta Valley, from where he was able to purchase it. The restoration began on 28 December 2022 and was finished 25 days later, ready for MCM. Running his own business, Sammy's Rust n Custom, much of the work was done by himself, along with family and friends. There is a carriage that needs to be completed, then he hopes to use it in more Santa parades to be able to take it to schools — Grandma would be thrilled





We couldn't walk past this striking ute without taking a second look. The paint colour is a custom pearl and makes the ute pop. The 2009 Holden has a cammed L98 six-litre V8 and TR-6060 six-speed manual box. That great stance is courtesy of ultra-low King springs



for today was the burnout comp. Unfortunately, the field of 26 cars only got to perform one burnout each, mainly due to time restraints. A number of North Island entrants had ferry sailings, and State Highway 1 was due to close at 8pm north of Kaikoura for maintenance, so many really needed to get past before the road was shut down. It was great to see so many out-of-town guys make their way to Rangiora for the comp, and they are always warmly welcomed by the massive crowd.

The lack of wind at times made it hard to see the action, but that aside, an awesome display kept the crowd rowdy. And once the smoke had finally cleared,

Ricky, from Ireland Motorsport in the North Island, was awarded first place driving 'FULLON', his green supercharged Holden ute. Second place also went to the North Island — the ever-impressive 'NUTOUT' owned and driven by Hayden Wilby — and third place went to local smoke maker Graeme Keats in his '70s Falcon ute.

And with that, folks, another very successful MCM event came to a close. If this is an event you have never been to, or it's on your bucket list, head to Rangiora next January, as you won't be disappointed, and remember to bring sunscreen — and a coat. **V8**



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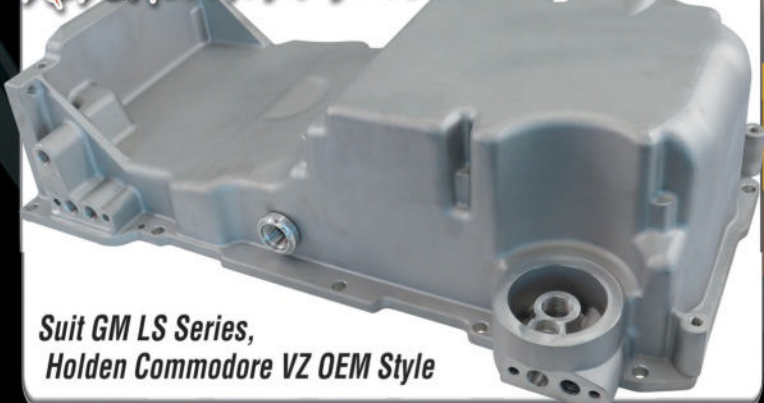


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WORDS: ROD DUNN PHOTOS: ROD DUNN / G.D AUTOSPORT

This month, we introduce you all to New Zealand's oldest hot rod club, Rod Benders Inc from Christchurch. Some may disagree with that title but sitting down with the guy who started it all, Taff Mathie, he explains: "There were one or two clubs about back in the day but they shut down for different periods before being reformed some time later, whereas Rod Benders has had continuous membership since it was formed." The first appearance of a hot rod was in the late 1930s in Southern California where people would race modified cars — and by 'modified' we mean stripped down to go faster. This trend caught on worldwide over the coming years, with New Zealand not immune, enticing many young men and women into the hobby we know today.

Taff recalls buying his first 'rod', a 1928 roadster back in early 1957 simply to cruise around in. He knew of some others who followed his lead and did a similar thing. "I was at home

one day when three guys I knew — namely, Malcolm Wilson, John McCormick, and Ron Kirby — all arrived at my house," he tells us. "They suggested that we should all start a hot rod club, which I thought was a great idea."

Back then, they all had what Taff describes as "basic" cars: roadsters with the guards removed. Taff recalls the 1930 Model A roadster that Malcolm had at the time. The guards and valance had all made their way to the scrap heap and underneath the roadster was a great big muffler that he had painted 'Rodbender' on. To this day, Taff is unsure where that name originated, but when someone asked what they would call the club, another in the group suggested 'Rod Benders', a club that caters to pre-1949 American-origin vehicles. An ad was placed in the local newspaper on 14 July 1957 (great memory, Taff), advertising for anyone interested in forming a hot rod club. Much to their surprise, around 200 people showed up for that first meeting. "They didn't all turn into





card-carrying members," Taff explains, "but it did show us that there was a lot of interest in what we were doing."

Jumping ahead 65 years, Taff is blown away these days with the clubrooms and membership, and the quality of cars within the club. "We must have done some good back then," he laughs. Recalling the early days of the club, he can remember that people drove things like Model As and Morris Oxfords. With a solid core of around 25 members, people only had one car and it was used for everything, so if you broke it on a cruise then you worked on it all night so that you could get to work in the morning. There were no parts stores like today, so repairs were done with whatever you had lying around, or whatever you could beg, borrow, or steal.

In those early days, an old service station in New Brighton became available for rent for £30 a week, so this served as their first clubrooms. As the club membership grew, a move to an old rowing club building that was much bigger became necessary. Taff can recall a new club that started, The Thunderbirds, over in Papanui that took a few members as it was aimed more at the custom side of rodding. Unfortunately, that club only lasted about six months.

He also remembers a new member who came along from Sheffield and was able to arrange potato-picking jobs for members that became fundraisers for the club, with proceeds going towards the construction of their first new clubrooms.

As Rod Benders grew, Taff drifted away as family commitments took priority. He eventually sold his roadster to his son-in-law, who still has it, and, with four doors now being a necessity, a Mk1 Zephyr became his vehicle of choice. He has owned all the models of Zephyrs over the years but currently owns a Suzuki Swift.

The club recently celebrated its 65th anniversary, with many past and current members attending, including Taff. Rod Benders is a very proactive club, with many club runs, and members attend a lot of the monthly events held in Canterbury each year. One of the most



**“ROD
BENDERS
HAS HAD
CONTINUOUS
MEMBERSHIP
SINCE IT WAS
FORMED”**

active members is Mac T, who can be seen, no matter the weather, attending the monthly breakfast runs, car events, and cruises throughout the Christchurch region in his T-bucket. A number of second-generation members also attend the club, so it's safe to say that Rod Benders' future looks to be in good hands.

Finally, we want to give a shout out to club president Matt Lott, who suffered a serious leg injury recently and has a long road to recovery ahead of him. He was unable to be at our shoot due to his hospital stay, but thanks to him, and Don Edwards, for getting things organised. We wish Matt a speedy recovery. >

BEVAN
MATHEWSON

CAR:
1939 CHRYSLER

RETIREMENT PROJECT

HAVING OWNED A SIMILAR CAR BACK IN HIS YOUTH, BEVAN MATHEWSON KNEW EXACTLY WHAT HE WANTED HEADING INTO RETIREMENT

Up until around five years ago, Bevan had been living in Australia for 30 years, where he worked at an aluminium smelter. Looking at his fast-approaching retirement, Bevan decided to return to New Zealand, and settled in Geraldine. Not long after, he made the move to Christchurch, where he came across his 1939 Chrysler sedan for sale. Purchased sight unseen, the Canterbury car was similar to one he used to own years ago, so he had no problem swapping cash to put his name on the ownership

papers. It was not long after purchasing the Chrysler that Bevan joined Rod Benders.

When he first got the car, it was running its original side-valve engine, but it decided to "pack a sad", as Bevan puts it, a few years ago, so a hunt was then on for a replacement engine. Going for something that some may think was way out of the box, Bevan chose to repower the Chrysler with an AU XR6 six-cylinder engine — and why not? Isn't hot rodding about building something with what you have? Bevan chose to go with a carburettor over injection and has used a three-speed auto behind it. A Falcon gave up its rear axle, which now resides under the Chrysler's bum, and Mitsubishi discs were installed up front in conjunction with Toyota callipers. Bevan has done all the work on the car himself and is quite proud of that fact, and rightly so, considering the car went straight through certification with nothing at all to fix. The interior has had a re-cover and a floor shifter has been added, but the dash is stunning and appears to be exactly as it left the factory 84 years ago, apart from the GPS that sits on top. Widened rims round out the picture of this very neat, useable rod.

Bevan gets out in it as much as he can, with club runs and the monthly rodders' breakfast being popular. >



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RODDING
ABOUT
BUILDING
SOMETHING
WITH WHAT
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**MAUREEN
BLANCHARD**

**CAR:
1932 FIVE-WINDOW
COUPE**

GRANDMA'S HAULER

WHEN THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED ITSELF, MAUREEN WAS ONLY TOO HAPPY TO TAKE OVER OWNERSHIP OF THIS GORGEOUS '32

Maureen has owned her gorgeous 1932 five-window coupe for three years. Yes, that's correct, this rod is owned by a lady, a grandmother to boot, whose three grandchildren absolutely love riding in the car. Having owned two previous hot rods, the first being a 1930 Hupmobile, and the second a '47 four-door sedan, Maureen had spent some time without a hot rod, so when a club member turned up at her home with an offer for her to purchase the '32, she simply couldn't turn it down. Speaking to her, and partner Nick, they both can't speak highly enough of the original builder of the rod and the quality of the build. "Everything is finished off so nice and clean," says Nick. "And it drives really great," adds Maureen. "We took the car to Masterton a couple of years ago to an event where it placed in the top five."

Originally built by a Rod Benders member, and first hitting the streets in 2014, it's hard to see that it's been in use for nine years, as it appears so fresh, partly due to the care it receives from Maureen and Nick. Sitting up front of the coupe is a beautifully detailed 350 crate motor backed by a TH350 trans. A Ford eight-inch rear sits out back. The great handling of the coupe can, in some ways, be attributed to a couple of club members who were instrumental in helping with the steering geometry set-up.

"Anyone who has driven it remarks about the superb handling," says Nick. And does it get used much? Well, according to Maureen and as mentioned earlier, the



grandkids love it. It's been used to take them to end-of-year school functions and school balls. Luckily, Nick also has a rod so no one misses out.

Maureen joined Rod Benders back in 1996 and Nick joined in '92. According to Nick, years ago he was into his speedway and had his own race car, so Saturdays were always speedway time and Sundays were hot rod time.

We ask Maureen if there any plans to change anything on the coupe. "No, not really, except maybe change the tyre size to make parking a little easier for me," she says. Other than that, the coupe just has more cruising in its future.

IT'S BEEN USED
TO TAKE THE
GRANDKIDS
TO END-OF-
YEAR SCHOOL
FUNCTIONS AND
SCHOOL BALLS



CLUB CORNER
SPOTLIGHT

DAVID
SEARBY

CAR:
1928 FORD
ROADSTER



TEAM DUO

DAVID KNEW THAT HE LOVED THE LOOK OF THE '40S HOT ROD AND SET OUT TO CREATE EXACTLY THAT IN THIS FATHER-SON PROJECT

This beautiful-looking '28 Ford roadster didn't always look this way. Originally built by David's father, Andrew, back in the '80s, it wore full fenders and sported a different back end. It was also running a six-cylinder Holden engine back then. As is the case with many cars, it changed hands and resided at another home until Andrew was able to purchase it back some time later. Eventually, David showed an interest in the rod so bought it off his father in 2006. "I was slowly getting into the Japanese stuff," David tells us, "but luckily Dad was able to pull me in the right direction."

Deciding to build it as a father-son project, David had an idea in his head as to how he wanted the final product to look. "I'm really into the kind of '40s look of a hot rod," he says. With Andrew doing the engineering side of things, and David putting his skills as a body and paint man to use tidying up the body and treating it to a new coat of bright red paint, the results speak for themselves. Believe it or not, this was David's first full paint job on a vehicle.

One thing that David was very firm on when starting out the build was that the rod was always going to wear steelies fitted with rings and caps. The beautiful fawn-coloured interior, which complements the bright red paint perfectly, was stitched together by Will Sales after the duo built the

bench seat. Andrew was responsible for the construction of the hood and sides, while Rick Murray was tasked with punching the louvres. As for the running gear, a 302ci V8 and C4 trans send the power to a Ford eight-inch rear.

Completed, and back on the road in 2010 in time to attend the Blenheim nationals, David is quite proud of the finished rod. "It's just nice and reliable to drive and I've taken it all over the country," says David. He has been a club member for 15 years. ➤



IT'S JUST
NICE AND
RELIABLE
TO DRIVE
AND I'VE
TAKEN IT ALL
OVER THE
COUNTRY

**GARY
ARPS**

**CAR:
1932 FORD FOUR-
DOOR SEDAN**



OLD TIMER

GARY MAY NOT HAVE THE BEST MODEL HOT ROD BUT HIS '32 WAS BUILT ON THE PRINCIPLES THAT HOT RODS WERE FOUNDED ON – BUILD IT WITH WHAT YOU HAVE

Gary would probably be the first to admit that his 1932 Ford four-door sedan isn't the prettiest, or most expensively built rod, but it's certainly one of the oldest, untouched rods out there, having been on the road like this for 50 years. From humble beginnings, the Ford has served Gary and his family well over the years. As was the case 50 years ago, and in fact from the day that the rodding movement began, you built what you could with what you had, and Gary was no different, starting with two old derelict cars that no one wanted. The second body that he used was actually found at a student flat. "I really didn't want the car when the student offered it to me," says Gary, "but after much begging on his part I finally gave in and shelled out the 60 pounds asking price, much to my wife's concern." Over the course of time, the best parts from both cars were slowly pieced together to form something that resembled a car. And of course, as with most things, kids, mortgages, and life in general has a way of slowing the progress of these projects which often get sidelined. Over the years the Ford has had lots of small changes, like the rear end and engine. The original engine that Gary installed was a flathead 'bitsa'. "There was no Repco store to pop down to back then, so you built things



from the parts you had," says Gary. The flathead was a pilot block with '34 truck heads. It served him well, for 45 years actually, before being replaced with another flathead, this time using a 1942 military Ford block. This time around Gary spent many hours gathering information on what worked with what. The gearbox is a Toyota three-speed with overdrive using a Flat Attack kit from Aussie to mate together. The paint on the exterior has seen better days, but shiny paint is too overrated. As Gary explained, "I could spend \$20k on body and paint but it won't make it go any better." The wheels are factory wires that Gary modified himself. He did four sets back in the day and said he isn't keen to repeat it. The set on this car was widened an inch on the rear and narrowed an inch on the front. Gary's wife was responsible for stitching up the interior, using a mix of vinyl and Draylon. "That was just another one of those things you did while raising a family and paying a mortgage." As for future plans? Gary is actually Taff's son in law and is about to put the finishing touches on Taff's original '28 Roadster.

**AFTER MUCH
BEGGING ON HIS
PART I FINALLY
GAVE IN AND
SHELLED OUT
THE 60 POUNDS
ASKING PRICE**

FLAMIN' A

NEVER ONE TO LEAVE THINGS ALONE, DAVE HAS CHANGED MUCH OF HIS MODEL A COUPE, AND AFTER 22 YEARS, HE ISN'T DONE YET

Originally built by local rodder Mal Hurrell, this 1929 Model A coupe was eventually sold as an unfinished project. After spending several months in Auckland, it made its way to the West Coast of the South Island where Dave purchased it 22 years ago. The interior had been finished by that time. On inspection once under Dave's ownership, he noted that it had been built with a lot of second-hand parts and didn't handle very well, so he undertook a four-year rebuild, starting in 2000 and completing it in 2005. The chassis was rebuilt, and new paint applied in 2005. Darryl McKenzie was responsible for applying the flames. The '29 had a rumble seat when Dave first got it but he was not a fan so it was changed to a boot. He also made the bonnet himself with a little help. The car was finished in time to attend the 2005 Nationals on the West Coast. "There isn't much I haven't changed on the car," says Dave. "I try to update or change something every year." A 327 powers the coupe, backed by a TH350 and Ford 8-inch diff. Dave was a member of Kustoms Car Club back in 1978 for a while before family and houses took priority. He then joined Rod Benders around 87/88 before having a spell at East Coast Rodders, then returning to Rod Benders 15 years ago. "I'm a proactive type of person and that's why I return here, as they are too," says Dave. Asked

if he was on the committee, Dave explained that he has a much more important job — barman. It's a job he has been doing for about six years. He opens the clubrooms for fortnightly meetings, is on the zone committee, and Nationals committee too. And as for changes for the coupe, a new engine and trans would be great as the past year has seen a lot of issues with his current package. **V8**



DAVE
EXPLAINED
THAT HE HAS
A MUCH
MORE
IMPORTANT
JOB —
BARMAN



CLUB CORNER
SPOTLIGHT

DAVE
STEPHENS

CAR:
1929 MODEL
A COUPE

BLOWN XA FALCON COUPE

BIG GUNS

STATISTICALLY, IF YOU GROW UP IN WEST AUCKLAND YOU ARE MORE LIKELY TO OWN A V8 THAN ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE COUNTRY (EXCLUDING WHANGANUI, OF COURSE). DEAN RENNIE HAS KEPT UP THAT TRADITION IN THE FORM OF A BLOWN XA FALCON COUPE

WORDS: SHANE WISHNOWSKY PHOTOS: RIXSTA SAMMONS







**WHEN HE HAD
ENOUGH MONEY IN
THE BANK HE WENT
BACK, PICKED UP
THE HUFFER AND
THE BONNET WITH
THE HOLE ALREADY
CUT IN IT**

Back in 1991 Dean Rennie joined the NZ Army. He initially joined the infantry, going into the 1st Battalion RNZIR and life was good. Aside from 'doing the mahi', he says he didn't do a lot else, other than "go out with the boys". He had few interests but said he was "kinda interested in cars, and I liked Fords mostly; Aussie Fords to be exact".

The XA wasn't Dean's first Falcon though; his first one was a 1979 XD Fairmont Ghia with a 302ci Cleveland under the bonnet. He had this for a few years and says, "It was a great car to drive the guys around all over the country. I put some good k's on that car." While the XD was a nice car (a factory 302ci V8, lowered on 14 x 7 and 14 x 8-inch Tridents) — a classic — what he really wanted was an XB or XC Coupe.

An army friend of his from Linton knew of a couple of Falcons for sale locally in Palmy. One was a red and black XB sedan that looked just like a GT, and he said it had all the good running gear — 351, four dual Webers, 9-inch, and a top loader. It was devoid

of an interior though and when the boys took it for a test drive "we were literally sitting on beer crates, but god damn that car was a weapon". Car number two was a mid to dark green XA coupe with a blower hanging out of the bonnet. This one really interested Dean but as funds were a bit tight (a little too much money spent on going out with the boys), he could only afford it without the supercharger. So the guy dropped the price, threw on a single carb manifold and another bonnet that hadn't been attacked with a tin opener, and Dean had his XA.

For a short time he was happy but the sight of that glorious chrome blower, front and centre out of the bonnet, haunted him at nights and he decided he just had to have it. Given that the coupe was already certified for it, it seemed a waste not to make use of that. So he worked a bit more, went out a bit less, and when he had enough money in the bank he went back, picked up the huffer and the bonnet with the hole already cut in it, promptly screwed them back into their rightful place, and life was good again.

With the shiny stuff now back on display front ➤



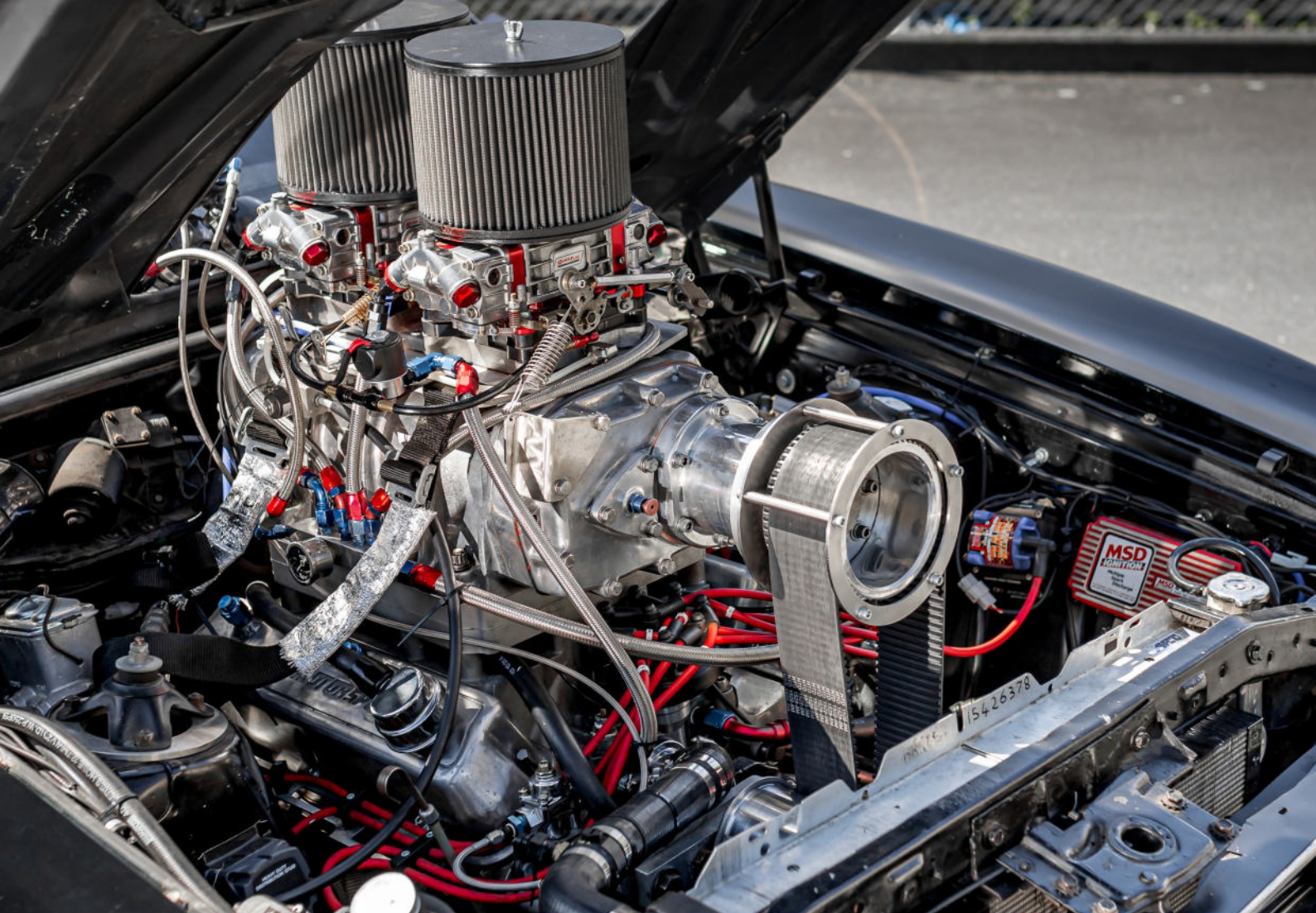


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and centre every time Dean laid eyes on the Falcon, he spent nearly every waking moment reading about and researching "all things cars". He said he had a lot to learn as his knowledge of such things was limited. Aussie *Street Machine* magazine and our own NZV8 were his "encyclopaedias" of choice and over the years he has amassed quite the collection.

At first he went down the path of, 'I need to find someone to help me with the maintenance and possible upgrades I had planned' and as is quite often the case, some good people were found along with some not so good people. One not so good person agreed to rebuild the blown small block for him, and money was handed over along with a pile of performance parts. When Dean enquired about progress, it was suggested a bit more money might quicken things up a bit so he obliged. Unfortunately, the engine build never came to fruition

and after much frustration Dean had to quickly go and collect the car, which was now minus the engine and all the performance parts he had supplied as they had "got lost", an expensive lesson learned and one he has never forgotten.

Once bitten and not wanting to repeat the process, it took Dean a long time to find someone he could trust to help get the Aussie icon back on the road. A good friend (the same guy who helped Dean find the Coupe) put him onto Shaun, an Air Force dude who was a complete Ford nut and a good mechanic. Dean and Shaun would become good friends and Dean says he owes Shaun a hell of a lot. His skills, enthusiasm, and knowledge have been invaluable over the decades, and it was nice to have met such a good bastard to help take the sour taste of being taken for a ride out of his mouth.

Dean then found himself deployed overseas, a blessing really as it gave him time to rebuild the bank account and for Shaun to help by suggesting what replacement parts would be good to replace those that had "got lost". This was about the time when we became able to shop and buy automotive parts off the internet. Shaun zapped up a better intake manifold than the modified tunnel ram the car had come with. He found some better internals, 5160 crank, H-Beam rods, and forged pistons. A pair of Brodix Track 1 heads were grabbed off eBay (back when you could find good cheap stuff on eBay), along with a blower cam and some solid roller lifters. An MSD 6BTM ignition module for the old "crab cap" dizzy was chucked on along with a set of ceramic-coated Pacemaker headers, and an 8-quart Canton race sump and main stud girdle were also bolted in place to help with the added boost.

In his spare time after work, Shaun pieced together the engine, and once it was running and back in the engine bay, Dean drove the wheels off it, up and

SPEC

1973 XA FALCON HARDTOP COUPE

ENGINE: 302ci bored 60 thou over displacing 310ci, forged Arias pistons, H-beam rods, 5160 forged crank, steel stud girdle, ARP studs and fasteners, grout filled and deburred block, 8-quart internally baffled oil pan, custom blower cam, solid roller lifters, Comp Cams roller rockers, aftermarket stud girdle, Brodix Track 1 cylinder heads, ceramic-coated Pacemaker headers, twin 650cfm Quick Fuel blower carbs, Speedmaster 302 Windsor blower manifold, 6/71 blower, Induction Solutions Saturday Night Special twin plate nitrous oxide set up, water methanol injection kit, mechanical high-volume fuel pump, MSD ignition controller, 6BTM and Blaster 2 coil, 8.5mm MSD leads, high heat thermal sleeves, twin 3-inch system, Flowmaster Delta Flow mufflers, aluminium radiator, twin 16-inch electric fans, electric Davies Craig water pump, Davies Craig digital controller

DRIVELINE: TCI Super Street Fighter C4 transmission, trans cooler, custom converter, Ford 9-inch diff, 31-spline Strange axles, high nodular iron strange diff head and pinion support, Truetrac locker centre, 3.7:1 ratio gears, 'strong backed' diff, driveshaft safety loop, shortened and balanced ZH Fairlane driveshaft

SUSPENSION: stock suspension front and rear, heavy-duty sway bars, aftermarket bushes, front strut brace, stiffer rear shocks, reset rear springs

BRAKES: brake booster, vacuum pump. Front: Stock Ford OEM alloy callipers, upgraded rotors and pads. Rear: stock Ford large finned GT drums

WHEELS/TYRES: Weld Draglites front and rear. 15 x 8-inch front, 15 x 10-inch rear. 255/50 R15 Toyo Proxies front. 295/50 R15 Toyo Proxies rear

EXTERIOR: XA GT front fender panels. Custom dark green paint

CHASSIS: factory

INTERIOR: B&M shift gate, Autometer / AutoComp, fuel pressure, oil pressure, boost, water temp, trans temp and tacho gauges, shift light, additional NOS pressure and fuel pressure gauges, custom NOS bottle armrest.

PERFORMANCE: untested



down the North Island every other weekend and even around the South Island, "back when gas was a hell of a lot cheaper".

Now that the bug had well and truly bitten Dean, more parts were bought. He got a complete 9-inch diff for \$300 "from somewhere in the Manawatu", purely for the LSD centre, off Trade and Exchange — for the young 'uns this was what people had to do before computers and Trade Me! He went and picked it up in the coupe and chucked it in the boot, "drum brakes and all, which shows you just how big the boot on a Falcon is", Dean says.

The car once again found its way into Shaun's shed where the pair bolted it in place, and a set of larger GT drums were fitted up along with new suspension bushes and a pair of better shocks. The lowering blocks the car came with were binned and the springs were reset, and an extra spring was slipped in to help stiffen up the rear. Completing the driveline overhaul was a TCI Super Street Fighter C4 trans along with a custom shortened and balanced Fairlane driveshaft, a much thicker unit.

This was around 2003/2004, when Dean moved up to West Auckland and then met his soon-to-be wife. Things progressed pretty quickly — child number one was born and became the couple's main focus, but the Falcon was always in the back of Dean's mind. He joined the "Hobby Club" on the RNZAF base at Hobsonville, and while he was there he did as many small jobs on it as he could manage. He rewired it, "as best I could", rust proofed the inner panels, and replaced the rusted-out exhaust, all with the help of the other guys in the club. Dean says it was a great club and with the use of a hoist and MIG welder for as little as a dollar a day, it was rude not to utilise it as much as he was able!

Four years later, the family was posted to Wellington where Dean was deployed to Afghanistan for the first time with the bomb disposal team. While he was offshore, the coupe sat in the shed and patiently waited. As soon as he got back he "tinkered" a bit more in the shed. In 2010 it was back to Afghanistan to blow up some more bombs and mines, and it was here that Dean would find his passion. ➤





A STRONG BACK KIT WAS WELDED ON THE DIFF HOUSING TO STOP THE TORQUE FROM THE BLOWER TWISTING IT UP LIKE A PRETZEL

Two years later, the Army life got the better of him and he needed out, kind of. He went back to Afghanistan (this time as a civilian), to teach and mentor the Afghan Security forces in the correct way to clear and handle unexploded ordnance. Not only was he helping save lives but he was also saving money for car parts and for his expanding family (now two kids and a wife) and to help buy their first house.

When he got home things got a bit more serious. The blower was removed and sent off to Al's Blowers to be rebuilt, a pair of boost referenced Quick Fuel carbs replaced the old 600cfm vacuum secondary ones, as well as some better MSD parts — Comp Cams roller rockers, a rocker stud girdle, and a water/methanol kit to help keep things inside the blower a bit cooler. All of this was slapped on top, and inside a freshly stripped, re-ringed, and re-bearing long block. Also the 28-spline axles were replaced with some much beefier 31-spline items, and a Truetrac 9-inch diff head.

Dean decided to give the inside and outside a bit of a birthday too. The car was also completely re-wired by a friend who was an auto sparky, as the old loom was "an absolute shambles". Remember, Dean had already had a crack at this up in Hobsonville, and he says, "This is why it needed to be professionally re-wired!"

The military-style fly in/fly out life continued over

the years, where Dean found himself training and mentoring in places with a hell of a lot of sand, working alongside and mentoring the Kurds as they cleared up unexploded ordnance left over from their dealings with the Islamic State.

When he returned home in 2018, he fired up the car one day and heard something he didn't like the sound of. After some investigation it was found that definitely one and possibly two cam lobes had been ingested by the small block at some stage. Nothing short of a rebuild was going to rectify this little dilemma, a curse of letting cars sit too long without starting them while you're away.

Dean found a guy in Upper Hutt called Lloyd Jonas to help him sort out this little issue. Lloyd worked at a shop/garage and was more than happy to let Dean store the coupe there and work on it whenever he wanted to, the bonus being that whenever Dean "ran out of talent", Lloyd was on hand to lend a hand, and thus a strong friendship was born.

The pair honed and deburred the block and polished out the oil return drainage section, as they felt this was part of what caused the cam failure. While they were at it, they grout filled the bottom half of the block to "help it take the abuse from the boost and the other power adders". A nitrous oxide system was definitely on the cards!

With the engine rebuild well under way, Dean just happened to run into a couple of local panel beaters willing to give the exterior a bit of a freshen up as well. Dean thought he might as well, given the engine was out, and the bay was in desperate need of a tidy up, so it would have been rude not to take them up on their offer. Being a hands-on guy, he hatched a plan which meant he could tackle a lot of the labour side of things and the panel beaters would do all the technical stuff and take over when Dean found himself out of his depth.

The body was treated to a back to bare metal birthday, and the rust under the rear window was deleted along with all the other little blemishes that had appeared over the years. The car was flipped on its lid where its underneath was cleaned, all holes were welded up and then rust protected, and a strong back kit was also welded on the diff housing to stop the torque from the blower twisting it up like a pretzel. Finally a fresh coat of the darkest shade of green they could find was applied,





Dean says that at night the car appears pitch black but in the sun the slightest hint of green shows through. Finishing off the exterior, and as a salute to Dean's and the car's Army history, his old unit badge has been replicated on the bonnet — a nice touch.

The rebirth of the Falcon stalled over Covid but at the end of 2021 she was all back together and ready to clock up some miles. Dean says he had a few teething issues getting it to run right initially and he was put in contact with Hayden at Custom Works in the Hutt Valley. With the issues identified, the car was bolted to the dyno where Hayden turned screw drivers and made magic happen. When the car was unbolted, the blower carbs were way happier and it was set for kill.

As we all know cars are never finished and Dean's is no exception. He has a few plans for the big Aussie coupe over the winter; electrically wire in the Induction Solutions Kit, as well as the MSD controllers and switches, and give things a general tidy up here and there. If he heads back overseas to help clean up the mess that wars make, then that could well be just the start of it. **V8**



DRIVER

DEAN RENNIE

AGE: 52

OCCUPATION: Soldier/Military Contractor

PREVIOUSLY OWNED CARS: Of note, '79 XD Fairmont Ghia Factory V8 that I regret selling more than I can vocalise

DREAM CAR: My Coupe, with more stuff. If I could I'd also love to get me another XD, preferably a Fairmont again — it was a great car.

WHY THE FALCON?: It's all I had/have.

BUILD TIME: Last re-build, maybe two to three years.

LENGTH OF OWNERSHIP: About 26 years.

THIS CAR'S HISTORY: Apparently it was originally a six-cylinder. The owner before me put in the V8 and blower and it was certified way back in 1995 at what I understand was the beginning of the whole cert/declaration process. Other than that I don't know much — sadly over a few decades ago I let the rego slip while I was overseas and then when I came home I had to hand in the original black plates... which was a bummer.

THANKS: Lloyd Jonas, Shaun Wild, Shaun Walters, John Evett. Just good mates who helped me build up the old girl over the many decades I've owned her. Mad Pete and Matt who helped hugely with the panel work and paint, Hayden at Custom Works in the Hutt Valley for helping me sort out some tuning issues and then putting a tune in it on the dyno, and of course the missus, the beloved wife who tolerates me and lets me wander off to the garage for hours to "do his thing". Love that girl!



BACK TO SCHOOL

WHEELS AT WHITBY PUT THE FUN BACK INTO FUNDRAISING FOR ADVENTURE SCHOOL IN WELLINGTON

WORDS: NZV8 PHOTOS: RIXSTA SAMMONS



Whitby local Dave Murtagh's 557ci Ford Galaxie is a hit wherever it goes, and Wheels at Whitby was no different. Unlike his Repco Beach Hop win, this event was within walking distance of home. Dave's company Action Civil were also on board as a sponsor and took care of improving access to the school's top field, so even the lowest of low cars could get in unscathed... something that was appreciated by all!



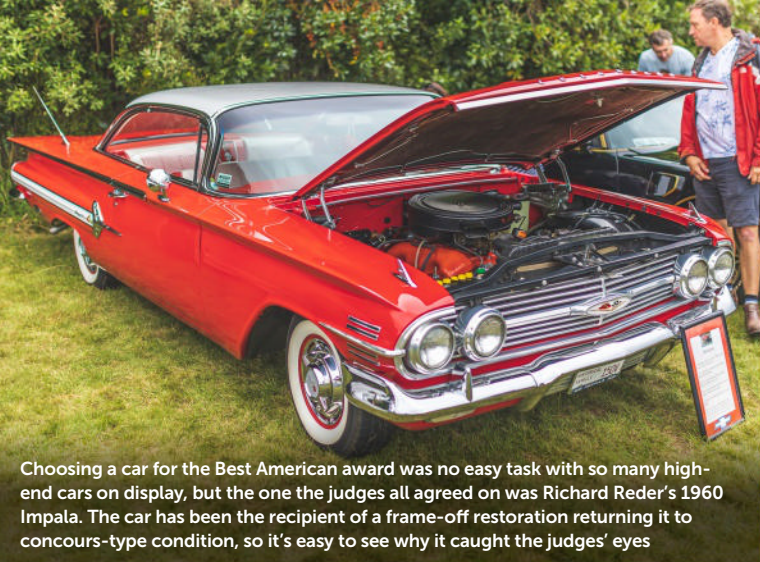
It all started as a way to fundraise towards getting a [bike] pump track and a scooter track at the school," explains Kym Wylie, the brains behind Wellington's latest car event. That simple idea evolved into Wheels at Whitby, which sadly was delayed not once, but twice due to Covid in 2022.

So when it finally took place on 4 March, it wasn't just a long-awaited event for the schools and kids alike, but a huge relief to all involved that it finally happened.

Although it would be easy to assume an event at

a primary school would be put together by a bunch of mums who don't have any involvement with cars, much in the way of school discos or similar, that wasn't quite the case here. The difference is that Kym's been around the car scene for longer than she cares to remember, and has been married to ex-NZV8 editor Todd Wylie for far longer than she will admit. That means that she's experienced countless car events both here in New Zealand and abroad as media, spectator, and car owner.➤





Choosing a car for the Best American award was no easy task with so many high-end cars on display, but the one the judges all agreed on was Richard Reder's 1960 Impala. The car has been the recipient of a frame-off restoration returning it to concours-type condition, so it's easy to see why it caught the judges' eyes



So her knowledge and enthusiasm meant it didn't take long for her to gather a crew of volunteers to form a committee to make it all happen... little did they know, the delays would drag out the build-up.

The Adventure School is in Whitby, about 30 minutes north of Wellington's CBD. While Whitby is not known as a car mecca, there were more than enough local cars and bikes to get the ball rolling, and thanks to Kym's connections, there were more than enough local sponsors who were happy to come on board. The gold sponsor list included names such as AlphaNZ Technology Group, Plimmerton Auto Services, Gear Eatery & Bar, Speedy Signs, and Whitby New World. The silver sponsor list had names a bit more familiar to these pages including Cover Me upholstery, Meguiar's, and Panhead Custom Ales, along with local businesses Action Civil, Kenepuru Car Service Centre, James Gill at Parka Insurance, and Harcourts Team Group. That long and professional list of sponsors helped to set the tone for what many are now saying was one of the most >



The team from Customs Body Shop were out on force with staff and customer cars including the ultra-wide 2017 Mustang of Renier Ackerman. The car sits crazy low over a set of BC Forged wheels measuring 20x11-inch up front and a chunky 20x13-inch on the rear



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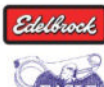


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STOCKISTS OF



THE PREMISE FOR WHEELS AT WHITBY WAS FOR IT TO BE OPEN TO ALL TYPES OF ENTHUSIASTS, CARS AND BIKES, NO AGE LIMITS



well-organised events that they've attended. That's high praise from car show regulars for an event in its first year.

The premise for Wheels at Whitby was for it to be open to all types of enthusiasts, cars and bikes, no age limits or origin restrictions — essentially, if it's cool, it's welcome, and, boy, did it deliver. Despite the weather threatening rain in the morning and other parts of the Wellington region feeling it, Whitby put on a stunner of a day. That was no doubt appreciated by not only the 200-plus car and bike owners but also the large crowd too.

With lots of local promotion as well as inclusion in school newsletters and the like, it ended up that the car

entry queue was bigger than expected, and the spectator queue was as well. It was interesting to hear feedback from many show-goers that they would never normally go to a car event, but they couldn't wait for this one to be on again, as they would definitely be back. That same sentiment was echoed by some of the trade stall holders, who may have just found themselves a new market. The various food and drink stalls were equally as popular, and there was word of them selling far more than they expected. The school PTNi (the modern PTA for those of us out of the school loop) also got together to run an epic bake sale and sausage sizzle and did a roaring trade.





Being aimed at families, there were of course kids' rides and entertainment too, and from all accounts they were also blown away, going as far as running out of prizes and merchandise in some cases, such was the level of patronage. A multitude of other local businesses also came onboard and donated prizes and experiences for raffles and silent auctions, which were popular on the day. All of the silent auctions were sold on the day and nearly all of the raffle tickets sold too, much to the delight of Kym and the committee.

As expected, there was a great range of cars on display, from vintage through to modern exotics, countless American classics and muscle cars, through to imports and late-model muscle. While it was all ➤



Local three-piece band Quarter Acre Block provided the perfect tunes for the day. Being acoustic they were not overbearing, and played a good mix of modern and retro hits, much to the delight of the crowd. The band's drummer Gordon Crozier isn't only the parent of ex-pupils but also the president of Capital Rodders





Plimmerton Auto Services wanted to put on something for the kids and came up with a tyre change challenge. A twist from other similar concepts is this time around the wheel had to be jacked up too, adding to the challenge



School parent and Police Assistant Commissioner Richard Chambers was busy all day getting kids in and out of a police car. Every time the siren went off, the kids were excited, although some adults may not have had quite the same feeling...



Love it or hate it, there's no doubt that Derak Govind has a style of his own. His signature look has been seen on a number of cars around the Wellington region over the past two decades. While many would have expected to see his Bumble Bee-inspired Camaro, instead he rocked up in a 2016 BMW i with plenty of custom touches. It managed to get the attention of the crowd as he took home the People's Choice Award





Paul Freeman's *Altered* was a big hit with the crowd thanks to its outrageous looks, super-low stance, and blown small block up front. There's already talk of a few fire-ups if the event goes ahead again next year! We can't wait to see the look on the kids' faces when that happens



about enjoyment, the event committee knew that adding some judged awards would always go down well with the car owners. Needing to keep neutral though, the committee pulled in a trio of judges, including Cruise Martinborough's Damien Pivac, NZV8 editor Rixsta Sammons, and Falgoun Patel, organiser of Wellington's Hardpark event. The trio had to work out who would take home awards for both bikes and cars, while the public would have their say with the ever-popular People's Choice. In an added twist to the norm, the school's principal, Tania Cox, was also invited to choose her favourite car and bike.

Like most others who attended, Tania was blown away by the turnout, and hugely grateful for all the effort that had gone in behind the scenes over the past few years to make it happen. Those sentiments were echoed by MC and Wellington local Doug Breden, who shared the stage with local three-piece band Quarter Acre Block throughout the day. Come prize-giving time, the winners walked away with trophies from Kiwi Engraving, along with a prize pack full of Meguiar's products.

Feedback on the event has been overwhelmingly positive, despite Kym herself saying there's still room for improvement. That feedback isn't limited to just the car community either, but also Whitby locals who were thrilled to have an event of this calibre in the local community, something that they can all be proud of. Based on how well it went as a first event though, Kym's clearly got the formula dialled, and we can only assume the next one will be even more impressive. **V8**



Below: The Central chapter of the Early Holden Club had a great turnout with a wide range of early and not quite as early vehicles, ranging from an FB to EHs, through to plastic-bumpered machines. Seeing so many together was a huge hit with the crowd





APPETITE for DESTRUCTION

SIMON'S LATEST CAR SITS ON THE CUFF WITH ITS JDM CHASSIS, GM'S BULLET-PROOF GEN III LS, AND A HARROP HUFFER. THIS TRACK-DAY WEAPON IS ONE HELL OF A CAR, BUILT WITH TYRE DESTRUCTION IN MIND!

PHOTOS: RIXSTA SAMMONS WORDS: SIMON DUDDING

Purchasing a car when you're not looking to buy one isn't that uncommon. Sometimes things or cars pop up that you can't say no to. There are lots of reasons not to say no. Personal connection with a vehicle, a long-term dream car, a classic car that brings romantic notions of years gone by, or just plain old

peer pressure. Any of these reasons is valid. Importing a car from overseas is pretty common nowadays too. Purchasing a car you weren't in the market for and sight unseen from overseas — Perth, it's far enough away it may as well be the US — is still a gutsy move. As it happens, in this case, the reward was well worth the risk. >





THIS PARTICULAR '82 COROLLA HAS A TOUGH STANCE THAT GRABS YOUR ATTENTION

If you were mentioning an early 1982 DX Corolla to this author, I'd picture myself being ferried around to Saturday sports by mum, as were many of the kids in my generation. This is probably not the reason that Simon Macleod found the 1982 Toyota Corolla with the appropriate number plate of 'HEDAKE' a must-have. This particular '82 Corolla has a tough stance that grabs your attention — that's if you don't hear it screaming towards you first.

When Simon stumbled across it on social media some time ago, it was just circumstance that another look was necessary to 'show' a good friend. You would be forgiven for having a second look too. The second look was some nine months after first seeing photos of the car online; the major difference this time was that it was advertised for sale! The opportunity to purchase a unique, drift-spec, blown V8 Toyota was too great. It may have helped that



SPEC

1982 TOYOTA COROLLA KE70

ENGINE: GM LS1 5.7-litre (348ci), Harrop 122 supercharger, rear-driven Gilmer belt drive, 102mm throttle body, fabricated intake pipe, stainless Xforce headers, twin three-inch exhaust, Koyo radiator, Holley 1800 fuel pump, two-litre Accusump, fuel cell

DRIVELINE: Tremec T56 six speed, Hurst shifter, Extreme twin-plate clutch, custom drive shaft, modified Toyota Hilux diff, 3.7:1 diff gears

SUSPENSION: Nissan S13 Silvia front struts, S13 adjustable coil overs, K-Fab lock kit, four-link rear suspension, adjustable coilovers

BRAKES: Nissan Skyline four-piston callipers front, twin two-piston callipers rear, hydraulic hand brake, slotted rotors front and rear

WHEELS/TYRES: Cosmis Racing Wheels USA 17x8-inch front and 18x11-inch rear wheels, 215/45/R17 Nankang front tyres, 265/35/R18 Kenda rear tyres

EXTERIOR: Repainted factory brown, modified wheel arches, custom steel flares, mini-tubbed rear, shaved rear door handles, rear bumper delete

CHASSIS: Modified factory chassis, eight-point roll cage with links to front struts, four-link rear, set-back firewall

INTERIOR: Front bucket seats, Velo racing harness, KW steering wheel

PERFORMANCE: 629hp at the hubs

there was a video circulating of Travis Pastrana frying tyres and limiter bashing his way around a skidpad in the KE70. If you know of the Gymkhana videos that Pastrana and the late Ken Block made, you'll agree that this '80s Corolla would fit right in. Saying that this is a tried-and-tested build is an understatement.

Now, the car being based in Perth brings its challenges, but having a trusted mate living there, they were able to have a good look over it. Quite handy, as looking at a car online and in person can sometimes have vastly different outcomes when you're the purchaser. All the reports came back that it was as good in the flesh as it was on the web. The next step was to make some room in the garage and the wallet.

A tough but necessary choice was made to sell the long-term garage resident. The pride and joy that Simon built up from a rusty shell into a show-stopper: the 20B rotary-powered Mazda 1300 is a flawless car that is well known in the import scene. Simon has trailed the Mazda around the country and attended many shows and drive events over his 15 years of ownership. Drive events are something that has become more appealing to Simon, and it's hard to beat on something you truly love. The Mazda is more a show car; the Toyota is built to be driven, and hard! The quality of the Mazda build is evident, as it was sold to another friend after a discussion about wanting to bring the Toyota over from Western Australia. All the pieces were falling into place.

Initially, it was a fairly easy process to import the Toyota. However, the shipping container took an agonising two months to arrive due to it being offloaded at several ports along the way. After it was landed, the Toyota was retrieved by trailer from the Wellington port.

The tough stance of the KE70 revolves around big >





KEEPING THE RAKE OF THE CAR AS FLAT AS POSSIBLE ADDS TO THE OVERALL LOOK

wheels and a wide track. It took the previous owner and builder many iterations to reach where it is now. The Perth-based owner built the car over many years, getting wilder with each revision. The car initially went through a few four-cylinder engine combinations before receiving the naturally aspirated 335hp LS1 and Tremec T56 six-speed from an SS Commodore. The body was modified at this time with the addition of a full roll cage, set-back firewall, and custom rear end.

These days, 18-inch wheels aren't really regarded as large, particularly when you consider that 19-inch wheels are a standard fitment for 2022 Mustangs when they leave the factory. The size of the wheel arch is a key distinction between old Japanese cars and modern vehicles. The factory-installed 13-inch wheels on the KE70 Corolla make the wheel arch openings noticeably smaller. When you fit wheels five inches bigger than factory, you're going to have to do some work to fit them or you'll just create a donk! The wheels are from Cosmis Racing Wheels USA with 17x8-inch at the front and the big 18x11 inch in the rear. The tyres that don't hang around for long are 215/45/R17 up front and 265/35/R18 in the rear. This tyre sizing keeps the overall height of the

wheel/tyre combination to under an inch difference in diameter front to rear — keeping the rake of the car as flat as possible adds to the overall look. The comparatively narrow front tyre allows for a bunch of steering lock with the aid of cleared front inner fenders. The fabricated flares are all steel and built this way for durability. If you've ever witnessed what a disintegrating tyre does to a fibreglass bolt-on flare, you'll understand why. With the desired ride height set, the wheel arches were extended well past the factory openings to fit the new wheels. The full roll cage links up with the fabricated rear end and panel work that allows the rear doors to still operate even with the large tubs, while the body was cleaned up and painted in the classic factory-option brown.

Interior design is minimal and functional. Even with a minimal screen to show important engine data, the dashboard failed to make it. There are bucket seats and safety harnesses to keep you in front of the KW steering wheel and custom pedal box, where all of the fun controls are conveniently located. ➤





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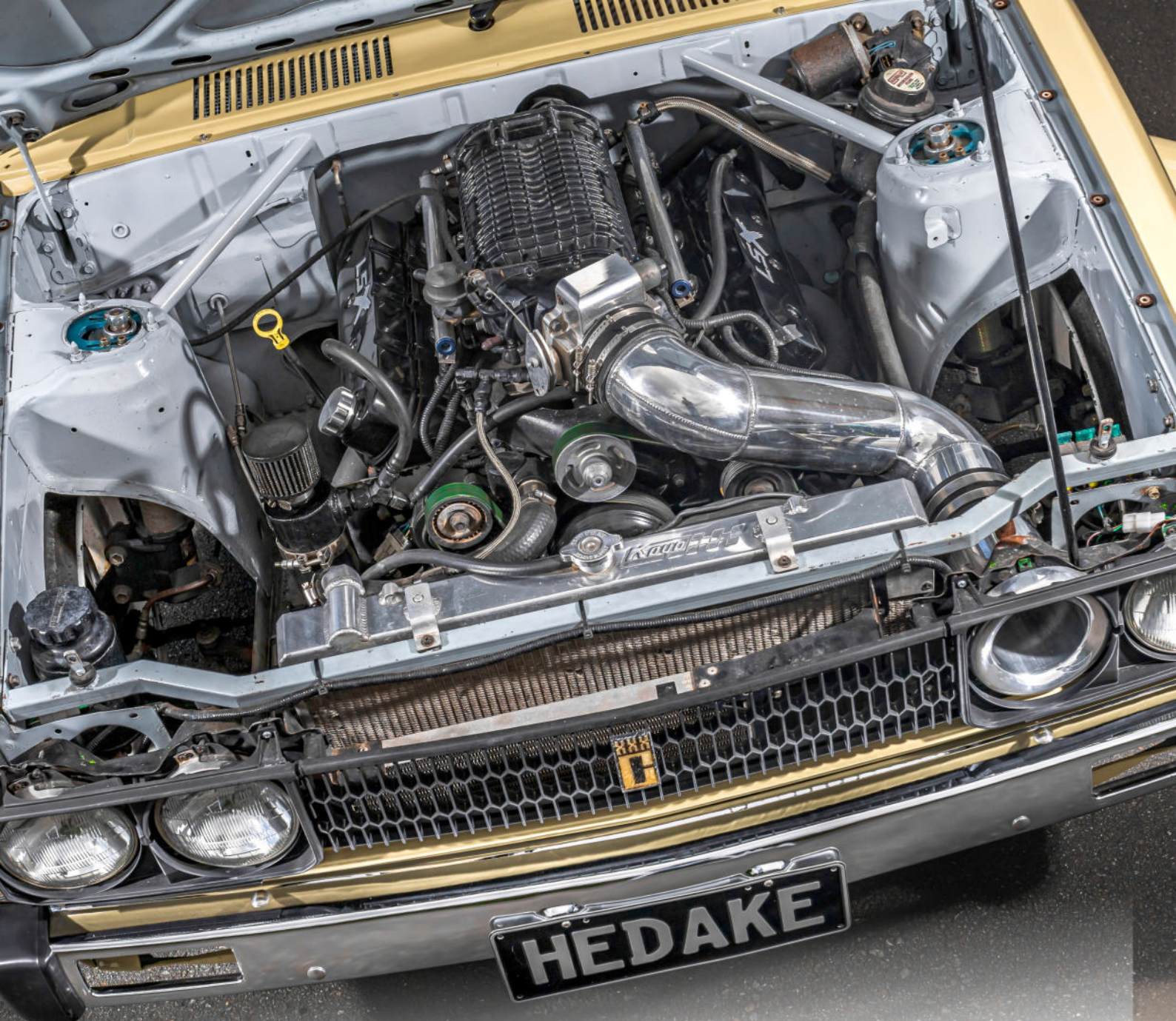


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While the Hurst shifter thumps gears through the T56 six-speed box, the billet drift brake grabs the rear brake rotors with its own set of callipers.

After killing tyres and sliding its way around the Perth streets and race tracks, the Corolla got a fresher up by way of more power. Added to the top of the LS1 is a Harrop 122 supercharger driven through the back of the engine via the Gilmer belt drive. Still retaining the factory ECU, the engine winds its way to an impressive 629hp on a hub dyno. Even with double the amount of power, the engine remains reliable, which is why the LS swap is so popular. Fuel is supplied by the mighty Holley Dominator 1800 through -10 lines from the boot-mounted fuel system. The system is well laid out and is rated well over what is required. It should keep the LS healthy in even the most demanding situations. Stainless-steel Xforce headers feed a straight-piped three-inch twin-exhaust system that is tucked away under the car all the way to the rear valance — loud is an understatement!

The T56 six-speed transmission gets the power transferred through an Extreme twin-plate clutch and fed rearwards. To give the Toyota purists a break, the diff remains a Toyota factory option — not on this Toyota in particular but a Hilux. The factory Hilux



eight-inch ring gears and 31-spline axles are pretty tough and well up for the task. The housing just required some additional bracing to reduce the flex, along with new suspension brackets. A gear swap to a ratio of 3.7:1 keeps the revs in the right spot. The factory suspension set-up, as you'd expect, has well and truly been ditched for a tried-and-true custom four-link. The equal-length chromoly bars attach to the rear of the roll cage and are located via a Panhard bar. Adjustable coilover shocks keep the rear end firmly planted and top off a simple-yet-effective set-up. The front suspension is derived from Nissan Silvia uprights, with S13 coilovers and a K-Fab lock kit. The Nissan suspension conversion aids to the ease of the brake set-up — the Japanese company is known for its ease of cross swapping parts across different chassis platforms. The brakes consist of four-piston callipers from a Skyline up front and dual two-piston callipers in the rear — one for the main brake circuit and the other for the hydraulic handbrake. The brake rotors have been upgraded to the slotted variety to help slow the car in spirited driving situations.

After sitting in the shed for 11 months, a few minor issues have been addressed, but Simon is generally pleased with the Toyota. The build quality is more than adequate. The car has already attended several events and received a great deal of attention. It does blur the lines between import and domestic, with Toyota being more domestic for New Zealand if you want to argue the case, but the attention it receives is overwhelmingly positive. It's a unique build that you wouldn't normally see.

Simon bought the Toyota to be used and used often. The recent 48Rotary track-day event was rained out by Cyclone Gabrielle and the most recent drive day at Manfeild raceway was a bit too busy to let things properly loose for the first time. The spare rear wheels and tyres have had it easy so far, but it shouldn't stay that way for long. **V8**

DRIVER

SIMON MACLEOD

AGE: 37

OCCUPATION: Excavator operator

PREVIOUSLY OWNED CARS: V8 Hilux, 20B rotary-powered Mazda 1300, Mazda Familia BMFR with Mitsubishi Evo repower

DREAM CAR: Just something different and cool. Maybe a nice family hot rod next time

WHY THE TOYOTA: It was different and a proven reliable track car

LENGTH OF OWNERSHIP: Eleven months

SIMON THANKS: Partner Hiltz, workmates and Goodman Contractors, Rohan at Bridgestone Upper Hutt, Glen at Maidstone Mechanical, everyone who offered help along the way getting the car to New Zealand and making changes to it



THE BRAKE ROTORS HAVE BEEN UPGRADED... TO HELP SLOW THE CAR IN SPIRITED DRIVING SITUATIONS





GOOD BYE BILLY

Despite never owning a drag car of his own, Billy Douché dedicated his life to the drag racing community. Thanks to crewing for Terry Rogers, who campaigned various Alters up until the 1990s before moving on to join the Marsh Motorsport team in the early 2000s, Billy learned more about the technical aspects of drag racing than most of us could ever imagine.

That passion saw him as an instrumental member of the Marsh crew on all of their

dragsters, from the small block Ford-powered Spitzer, through to the A/fuel car and Top Fuel car, a car that took the title of running the first-ever four-second pass in New Zealand.

His passion rubbed off on his son Kane, who growing up at the dragstrip ended up meeting, and eventually marrying Jennifer Tynan, son of doorslammer legend Chris Tynan.

While Billy's health started to fade over the past few years, his passion never did, and he was there

at the track with either Kane's [ex Chris Tynan's] '55 Chev doorslammer, or with the Marsh team. He eventually got to run down the strip in a car of his own, a very cool '66 Galaxie with a 514ci Marsh-built FE motor earlier this year, with Tony Marsh at the wheel. Sadly though, his time was running out, and he passed away in February, bringing to an end almost 50 years of dedicated support to Meremere Dragway and the drag racing community. When volunteers were called for, he was often the first to arrive and the last to leave, and his infectious humour would keep all others entertained. He'll be missed by many. RIP.

COWBOY'S FRESH STEED



Steve 'Cowboy' Carlsen has got himself a new bucking bronco, a full tube chassis version of his previously campaigned '64 Falcon Sprint. Loving the shape of the old car, but realising the 521ci BAE Hemi and 16/71 blower combo were overkill for the chassis, he had a mould taken of the body and set about building a more suitable chassis to go in it. Rather than sit out last season with no car though, he purchased the ex-Mark Bardsley Camaro with a promise to on-sell it to

fellow Wairarapa racer Dwayne Garrett when the new Sprint was completed.

The new car hit the track for the first time at 1st Auto Parts Wild Bunch Challenge on 10 February at Napa Auto Parts Dragway.

The car looks killer, and was a winner with the crowd before it even turned a tyre on track, thanks in part to the amazing airbrush work up front by Kurt Goodin. As with any new combo, there's always sorting to do before it shows its

potential, but Cowboy now has a combination that could easily see him running at the pointy end of door car racing in NZ, be that running in Wild Bunch or any other class he decides to tackle. That deal to sell the Camaro to Garrett all fell into place and Dwayne and team have gone on to fit the engine from their now-unsold dragster and have become the Top Doorslammer National Champs for the 2022-2023 season.



OVER AND OUT

The news of a crash at the track is never something we want to hear, even if the driver is lucky enough to walk away. Sadly, that was what happened to Barry Plumpton and his Bullet Camaro at Masterton Motorplex in mid-February. A statement posted on the team's Facebook page states: "... not the best outcome for the first and only run today. Car ran well but shortly after the finish line the car

made a move and air got under it causing the car to roll. Driver is a bit sore but the car did its job in keeping Baz safe."

Barry and the team have been great ambassadors for the sport for many years now, competing at tracks all around NZ and even taking the 959ci nitrous assisted Camaro to Australia. Regularly crossing the finish line at over 230mph, the fact that Barry was able to

walk away from the crash is a testament to the design and construction of the car, safety equipment, and the track. It certainly wasn't the end to the first and only five-second doorslammer in New Zealand that we wanted to see. On behalf of all drag racing fans in New Zealand, we thank Barry for the great show he's put on in the car over the years, and hope that someday we see him return.

NZ'S QUICKEST STREETERS

NAME	VEHICLE	TIME (S)	MPH	ENGINE	TRIM AS RACED
REECE FISH	1956 CHEV BEL AIR	7.38	194.50	540CI BBC TWIN-TURBO	E85, ET STREETS
BRENDON SHEARING	1971 HOLDEN HQ MONARO	7.84	185.84	509CI BBC TWIN-TURBO	C16, EXHAUST REMOVED, DOT HOOSIERS
DANIEL SOUTHALL	1969 CHEV CAMARO	7.95	182.59	406CI SBC TWIN-TURBO	C16, EXHAUST REMOVED, DOT HOOSIERS
AARON JENKINS	1977 HOLDEN TORANA	8.14	169.40	540CI BBC TWIN-TURBO	E85, DOT HOOSIERS
MIKE CARLTON	1973 CHEV CORVETTE	8.32	167.49	540CI BBC SC	AVGAS, NITROUS, DOT HOOSIERS
GARY BOGAART	1975 FALCON XB COUPE	8.61	158.56	395CI SBF NITROUS	C16, EXHAUST REMOVED, ET STREETS
STUART GOLDSWORTHY	1969 CHEV CAMARO	8.72	161.16	540CI BBC TWIN-TURBO	E85, DOT HOOSIERS
TONY RICHARDSON	1946 FORD JAILBAR	8.79	155.82	555CI BBC TWIN-TURBO	PUMP GAS, DOT HOOSIERS
DAVE MOYLE	1989 FORD XF FALCON UTE	8.81	158.26	563CI BBF NITROUS	C16, ET STREETS
TONY WITINITARA	1979 HOLDEN HZ PREMIER	8.87	157.38	540CI BBC PROCHARGER SC	C16, DOT HOOSIERS
WAYNE FOWLER	1967 CHEV CAMARO	8.86	153.13	454CI BBC SC	AVGAS, DOT HOOSIERS
SAM ANAND	1996 MITSUBISHI EVO IV	8.92	158.09	4G63 TURBO	E85, DOT HOOSIERS
TONY GERA	1970 FORD MUSTANG	8.92	150.83	480CI BBF NITROUS	PUMP GAS, EXHAUST REMOVED, ET STREETS
AARON JACKSON	1974 HOLDEN TORANA	8.97	151.42	555CI BBC NITROUS	AVGAS, EXHAUST REMOVED, DOT HOOSIERS
GEOFFREY DANN	1969 CHEV CAMARO	8.99	160.00	540CI BBC TWIN-TURBO	PUMP GAS, FULL EXHAUST
DALLAS GRAHAM	1978 TOYOTA COROLLA COUPE	9.00	147.44	1U2 TURBO	E85, DOT HOOSIERS
AZHAR BHAMJI	1969 MAZDA R100	9.01	152.00	13B TURBO	PUMP GAS, EXHAUST REMOVED, ET STREETS
BEN MOORCOCK	1974 MAZDA RX-3	9.08	155.74	13B TURBO	PUMP GAS, DOT HOOSIERS
MICHAEL SCHOLTEN	1998 MITSUBISHI EVO V	9.09	157.20	4G63 TURBO	E85, DOT HOOSIERS
ROGER BINNEMA	1968 PONTIAC FIREBIRD	9.09	149.98	540CI BBC NA	C16, EXHAUST REMOVED, ET STREETS
TANIA BINNEMA	1968 PONTIAC FIREBIRD	9.17	146.95	540CI BBC NA	C16, EXHAUST REMOVED, ET STREETS
MIKE BARI	1971 CHEV CHEVELLE	9.26	148.92	598CI BBC NITROUS	C16, EXHAUST REMOVED, DOT HOOSIERS
AZHAR BHAMJI	1973 MAZDA RX-3	9.32	144.13	13B TURBO	E85, STREET RADIALS
RIZWAN ALAM	2003 MITSUBISHI EVO 8	9.38	160.77	4G63 TURBO	E85, DOT HOOSIERS
DARREN RICHES	1954 FORD POP	9.43	141.71	540CI BBC NA	PUMP GAS, EXHAUST REMOVED, ET STREETS
ROSS WHELAN	1934 FORD MODEL Y	9.45	143.60	427CI SBC NA	C14, EXHAUST REMOVED, DOT HOOSIERS
WARREN BLACK	1972 HOLDEN HQ MONARO	9.52	143.44	555CI BBC SC	AVGAS, EXHAUST REMOVED, DOT HOOSIERS
WAYNE GRIMMER	1973 PLYMOUTH CUDA	9.62	141.46	588CI HEMI NA	AVGAS, ET STREETS, EXHAUST REMOVED
RAY PETERSON	1970 FORD MUSTANG	9.70	139.30	417CI WINDSOR NA	Q16, ET STREETS
ASHNIL KUMAR	1995 NISSAN SKYLINE GT-R (R33)	9.75	149.70	RB26 TURBO	E85, DOT HOOSIERS
ANTON BLANKEN	1990 NISSAN SKYLINE GT-R (R32)	9.77	143.72	RB26 TURBO	PUMP GAS, NITTO TYRES
BEN GAINFORT	1990 NISSAN SKYLINE GT-R (R32)	9.78	142.66	RB26 TURBO	E85, DOT HOOSIERS
DAN HARRISON	1969 CHEV CAMARO	9.81	141.00	540CI BBC SC	AVGAS, EXHAUST REMOVED, DOT MT
AARON WILLIAMS	2015 LTV FORD POP	9.81	136.98	400CI SBC NA	AVGAS, EXHAUST REMOVED, MT SLICKS
COLE RAIKA	1977 MAZDA 808	9.88	145.28	13B TURBO	PUMP GAS, DOT HOOSIERS
GARTH WHITE	1963 FORD GALAXIE	9.93	140.78	551CI BBF NITROUS	C12, DOT HOOSIERS
JUSTIN WEIR	2012 CHEV CAMARO ZL1	9.94	139.47	6.2L SC LSA	E85, MT RADIAL
TIM LACEY	1981 HOLDEN COMMODORE	9.94	132.51	BUICK V6 TURBO	AVGAS, EXHAUST REMOVED, ET STREETS
MATT KRILETICH	1973 FORD XA FALCON COUPE	9.95	135.56	410CI BBF NA	C12, EXHAUST REMOVED, ET STREETS
AARON COSTELLO	1969 CHEV CAMARO	9.97	141.11	LSX TURBO	PUMP GAS, DOT HOOSIERS
HARLEY DOUGLAS	1968 CHEV CAMARO	9.97	137.01	582CI BBC NITROUS	PUMP GAS, DOT HOOSIERS
ABDUL SAMAD	1992 MITSUBISHI EVO I	9.98	138.00	4G63 TURBO	E85, DOT HOOSIERS

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NZ'S 100 QUICKEST V8 DRAG RACERS

To update your details, email editor@v8.co.nz Yellow text denotes a new entry or bettered et / *Currently competing vehicles only listed

GROUP ONE TOP-10 VEHICLES

TOP FUEL	SPONSOR	VEHICLE	ET	MPH
Michael Franklin		Nitro FC	5.93	236.55
Karl Boniface	Castrol	Nitro FC	6.89	206.90
TOP ALCOHOL	SPONSOR	VEHICLE	ET	MPH
Tamara Silk	Lucas Oil	Dragster	5.84	245.00
Shane Lodge	RPM Automation	Dragster	6.09	227.42
Wayne Curry		'27 T-Altered	6.15	229.07
Bryan Norman		FE Dragster	6.16	223.87
Simon Fowke		FC	6.20	226.10
Andrew Curry		T-Altered	6.81	199.52
Grant Rivers		Pontiac Funny Car	6.85	201.79
TOP DOORSLAMMER	SPONSOR	VEHICLE	ET	MPH
Barry Plumptre	Focus Construction	Chev Camaro	5.92	237.42
Gavin Green		Pontiac Firebird	6.07	234.45
Nigel Dixon	Kruzin Kustoms	Ford Falcon	6.10	241.00
Benjes/Dillon	Childs Play	Chev Beretta	6.21	221.50
Dwane Garrett	Torquing Heads	Camaro	6.24	223.00
Trevor Smith	Trevor Smith Racing	Holden Statesman	6.26	225.94
Dwayne Garrett		Chev Camaro	6.30	214.55
Kane Douché	KND Electrical	55 Chev	6.33	225.00
Mark Thomas		Ford Customline	6.36	225.60
Prestney/Dobson Pirtek	Taranaki	Pontiac Grand Am	6.63	210.15
Steve Carlson	Wairarapa Automotive & Engineering	Falcon Sprint	6.65	204.69
Rex Duckett	Total Oil	Pontiac GXP	6.83	200.35

GROUP TWO/THREE QUICKEST VEHICLES

Christoffersen/King/Hay	RC Industries	Dragster	5.78	254.10
Lindsay/Karen Hay		'27 T Roadster	6.34	218.41
Jordan Robertson	Hutt City Autoworld	Dragster	6.37	197.89
Tony Marsh	Marsh Motorsport	Ford Maverick	6.38	211.49
Todd Vincent		Dragster	6.45	171.25
Grant/Adrian/Nicole Rivers	Blu's Brothers Racing	Dragster	6.48	205.68
Stuart Henley-Minchington	Anthill Mob/Garden City Movers	Altered	6.56	204.00
Bill/Clint Minchington	Trident Homes/Auto Trans CHCH	CHCH FC	6.58	201.30
Craig Griffith	Buck Engineering	Dragster	6.61	205.00
Roger Binnema		Camaro	6.66	191.48
Raymond/Trent Smyth	FE	Dragster	6.77	204.14
Alan Hartley	New Zealand Home Loans	Altered	6.84	187.45
Dave Tunnel	TPE Racing	Dragster	6.89	197.01
Grant Briffault	Tax Time Accounting	FE Dragster	6.90	195.09
Dion Crook	DB Racecars	FE Dragster	6.91	201.10
Aaron Lelean	A1 Exhaust	FE Dragster	6.91	190.89
JD Shepherd		FE Dragster	6.94	201.22
Ian Deboo	Mayhem Racing	Altered	6.96	192.17
Dean Scott		Chev S10	6.98	206.50
Sam Leviene		Altered	7.02	192.00
Ross Brown	G.A.S Parua Bay	FE Dragster	7.02	180.12
Darren Hayes		FC	7.04	198.17
Jason Robertson		Altered	7.04	165.00
Rob Boyce	Rob Boyce Racing	23 T Altered	7.05	184.07
Jodey Irving	Lucus oil	Chev Camaro	7.08	192.36
Cameron Paterson	Lichfield Poultry Farm	FE Dragster	7.11	191.00
Brent Whittingham		'69 Camaro	7.16	191.92
Steve Milliken	GSS	36 Chev	7.17	192.60
Kendal/Dylan Smith	Kruzin Kustoms	Dragster	7.19	188.17
Gerald Smith	Rivers speed/Feilding Flowers	'23 T-Altered	7.19	178.85
Graeme Bates	Haltech / SGR Engineering	69 Vauxhall PC Cresta	7.21	193.50
Fabian Goldbert	CFR Line	El Camino	7.22	198.23
Richard McCarthy		Altered	7.23	176.86
Mark Vincent		Freight Train	7.24	142.66
Gary Sinkinson		63 Chev Nova	7.25	198.12
Gary Bogaart		Altered	7.25	181.52
Roger Binnema	Cylinder Head Services	Honda Accord	7.26	194.86
George McCutcheon		55 Chev	7.27	200.53
Graham Christison		FE Dragster	7.28	179.11
Gary/Casey Cawthra	Macauley Metals	XA Falcon	7.28	168.95
Bobby Owens		'64 Ford Falcon	7.30	190.24
Ana Paterson		FE Dragster	7.32	184.93
Wayne Tangney		Dragster	7.35	181.13
Mark Gapp	Pro Parts	Willys Coupe	7.42	182.00
Vanessa Lilly	Rib Rattler Racing	23 T Bucket	7.43	183.00
David/Trevor Tynan		66 Impala	7.44	187.55
Peter Schimanski		Altered	7.44	178.00
Andrew Rea/Gary Martin	Martin & Rea	FE Dragster	7.46	189.23
Darryn Hayes		84 Corvette	7.46	189.04
JD Sheppard		VW Beetle	7.50	180.29
Jason Sellars	JSE Fabrications	XY Falcon Ute	7.52	185.08
Andrew Neiman		Dragster	7.54	168.00
John Hooper	Peko Contracting	Chev Nova	7.54	183.46
Paul Sattler		FE Dragster	7.56	176.77
Ryan Sheldon	Autochecker/KG Artwork	Plymouth Fury	7.59	173.54
Kurt Goodin		Chev Nova	7.60	177.89
Benji Sneddon	All Fleet Services	Willys Coupe	7.60	176.11
Neil Morgan	MJH Engineering	T-Altered	7.62	174.38
Michael Franklin		Pontiac GTO	7.69	165.50
Reuban/Jack Beaumont	Team Sonic	Altered	7.69	171.49
Robert Shearing		Camaro	7.72	176.70
Dylan Deboo	Mayhem Racing	55 Chev	7.73	180.55
Pete Lormans	Remarkables tools & Safety	FE Dragster	7.76	170.49
Neville Gadd		Dragster	7.78	175.44
Dave Mason	A1 Exhaust	FE Dragster	7.78	161.88
Rueban Beaumont		Sinister	7.80	169.00
Mike Wilson	Balclutha Automotive Services	Ford Capri	7.82	177.24
Ces Miller		59 Impala	7.90	166.87
Kevin Ericson		FE Dragster	7.95	176.12
Aidan Crook		HT Holden Ute	7.98	159.94
Craig Wilson	Evolution Painting & Decorating	Holden HT	8.03	174.22
Murray Hartley		Ford Mustang	8.07	166.93
Cory Silk	Otaihanga Speed Shop	Dragster	8.07	164.34
Bruce Riddick		Altered	8.11	161.99
Janelle Lawson		Dragster	8.13	165.94
Dutchie Wijdevan	Bran Roberts Towing	Falcon	8.15	161.13
Doug/Daniel Jefferies		T-Altered	8.18	160.10
Mike Cload		Chev Camaro	8.19	166.85
Pete Lormans		FE Dragster	8.22	157.40

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FAST PACED

GETTING CONSISTENCY OUT OF ANY DRAG CAR TAKES MORE THAN JUST LUCK – IT REQUIRES REPEATED TESTING, DEDICATION, AND PASSION

Well, for this column I don't know where to start, and I don't know where to end, and things could seem a little fast paced but that's what I feel the past month has been like.

Let's start with a trip back to Meremere with Michael Franklin and the Nitro hoon '57 Chev. After helping Michael get his first five-second pass last time out we went back to Meremere for the gasser wars to get more laps behind the wheel for Michael. Being a smaller event without the large car count, we knew the track wasn't going to be as good, so it was going to be a challenge all round. With commitments at work,

this was one of the shortest overseas trips I have ever had. I landed at Auckland airport at 12.30am, got a few hours' sleep, and then went to the track. While we didn't get any five-second passes, it was a really good learning day for Michael and the crew. Basically, straight after the last pass we left for the airport and got the 7pm flight back to Sydney on Sunday night.

That following Friday, we had hired Sydney Dragway to do some testing with the Aeroflow Ninja funny car. After learning some things, we had decided to try a completely different clutch set up in the car. With these top fuel funny cars

the clutch is such a critical part of the tune up — basically, when you change the clutch set-up you have to change the entire tune up. The day was forecast to be HOT, to the point it was going to be very difficult to get the car down the track. However, I was very pumped as these conditions are a great learning curve from a tuning perspective, but not ideal when you're trying to build a new tune up. Anyway, three really good shut-off passes in the heat had the car heading in the right direction.

The next day (Saturday) was the NSW track championship event. Workshop manager and

fellow Kiwi Gareth Rogers, along with crew member Kelsey Leahy, were both racing their modified altered, and since we had the big-rig set up we ran the two cars out of the big Aeroflow race trailer. It was a bit of a laugh as we pretty much had a top fuel funny car crew working on the two cars, but we had an absolute ball with Kelsey taking her first-ever event win.

Sunday was family day (even though we are together at track) and Monday was back out to the track for another test day with Ninja. Another three passes and let's just say it was one of those days at the racetrack where everything just works — the weather was great, the boys were smashing the turn around, my wife Monique was turning the screws on the big show, and by the end of the day we ➤



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were running times that would have made us competitive in the NHRA. You could say I was a pretty happy man.

What do you do after a day like that? Well most people would go back and start servicing the Topfuel funny car. Well in this crazy thing called life, not us — we pulled out the '57 Chev outlaw nitro car and did some testing with some ideas we had for that combo. So Wednesday we booked the track again and off we went. Now I love driving this car, so I was pretty pumped to get back in it. However, I will admit that I was a bit nervous after having only driven the Topfuel funny car two days earlier — would I get the routine right? Would I feel what the car was doing properly? The first pass was strange, but after that it all came flooding back and a PB for that car with a 5.29 at 274mph was a testament to the boys at the shop and the ideas we had. I never would have thought a 413ci motor with a 6/71 blower and no computer would run a 5.29 at well over 400km/h.

After an unreal couple of weeks, I would have been pretty satisfied (as I write this I'm thinking how crazy all this sounds), however

this journey isn't over yet. A couple of days later it was back on a plane to help the Pirtek boys with the procharged Pontiac, this time at Masterton Motorplex. After the boys found some issues while servicing the car which had been hampering the performance, I was confident we could start making some headway. It had shown so much promise, we now just had to make it work. The first pass being a 6.9 gave us some hope, however with a few changes on the

finals time. Well a 6.41 at 221mph had the team jumping up and down as it was also enough to win the title. Walking back to the pits someone asked me, "Why the long face?" My reply was it should have run a 6.3. It didn't take me long to convince the team we needed to go out for another grudge run, in fact I really don't think convince is the right word. A few more changes and 6.35 at 222mph came up on the scoreboards. I must admit I did struggle to

contain my excitement on that one. I was so happy for Jeff, Janice, and the family to see it all come together over the weekend, and with the whole family there it was pretty cool. The next morning it was 4am at the airport for a flight home. But let me tell you it was all worth it.

We then had a Topfuel funny car test session with

the Hart's funny car team and the King Kong outlaw car, and now I'm sitting at the airport to head to the US. It's fair to say it's been a HUGE period with some awesome results. It's not until you put it in a story like this that you realise how busy it actually was. But I love it, and it's a privilege to do what I get to do. **V8**

IT DIDN'T TAKE ME LONG TO CONVINCE THE TEAM WE NEEDED TO GO OUT FOR ANOTHER GRUDGE RUN

second pass it ripped off a 6.48 at only 197 mph — we now had something to work with. After a bit of a think tank overnight and a few more changes, we were ready for race day and a shot at the nationals title.

A first round win with a bit of luck with a boostless 6.9, an easy fix in the pits, and it was





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MODERN TECH, '80S TWIST

'80S BOX-STYLE FAMILY CAR TURNED 290KW
RACE-SPEC GTRNZ COMPETITOR



Motorsport enthusiast Jordan Russ writes to us this month with an interesting concept, and it's one that NZV8 is very keen to see become reality. Jordan currently owns a 1988 EA Ford Falcon that he uses in the Super Six circuit-racing class at Manfeild, and he has intentions to move from class to class as he dials in his driving skills. We'd say those skills should come rather quickly with his proven ability driving street stocks, TQ midgets, and midgets over the years and flying through the ranks.

The idea behind this concept is a purpose-built car for the GTRNZ class using the current EA Falcon as its base. The body kit would be a mash-up of early '80s Aussie touring cars of that era and historic sports sedans, combined with a widebody Pandem-style kit. The mix of the two

would give the Falcon a modern twist on the Australian V8 touring cars, along with keynotes to a staunch stance. Another reason for such a wide stance would be to suit the feet the Jordan would wish to run: a staggered set of gold and polished-lip Work VS XXs, 17x11 inch up front with 17x13 inch in the rear, with the stellar set of wheels wrapped in Avon Tyres' finest tread. With the snug wheel fit complementing the widebody kit, we move on to the power train — this is where it gets interesting!

There are many rules on what you can run in the GTRNZ classes, and Jordan has checked them all out and decided that a 5.4-litre Ford quad-cam V8 engine — also known as the '290 Boss' from the FPV BA GT Ford Falcon — would be the engine of choice to get the old '80s square body to boogie. Before we could get all

290kW to the slicks, passing that power through the drivetrain, it would first come in contact with the HGT sequential gearbox moving it down to the Winters quick-change live rear end, before laying the smack down on the tarmac — what a set-up, right?

Safety would be just as important as any other feature of the car, and keeping this high priority would be key, not only for survival in a crash but also to tick all the boxes to be able to race from scrutineering. A V8 Supercars-spec roll cage would be first on the checklist, and to keep Jordan firmly planted would be a simple one-seater set-up consisting of a seat from New Zealand's very own manufacturer of advanced motorsport seats and supplier of a range of safety-focused race parts: Racetech. One Racetech RT4119HRW driver's seat and Racetech

WHAT'S YOUR IDEA?

Have you got a wild concept idea? If so, we need you to transfer that information in an email to editor@v8.co.nz. All we need in the first instance is a simple outline of the idea. Then, if you're chosen to have our design team bring your concept to life for you, we'll get in contact and extract all the added info to make sure your concept is totally badass. We're not looking for some run-of-the-mill car here; we want forward-thinking, out-of-the-box, and unique. Maybe it's a modern-day street freak, a radical '60s custom, or a five-second street car — whatever it is, don't let logic or budget stand in your way. So, get your thinking caps on and fire us an email.

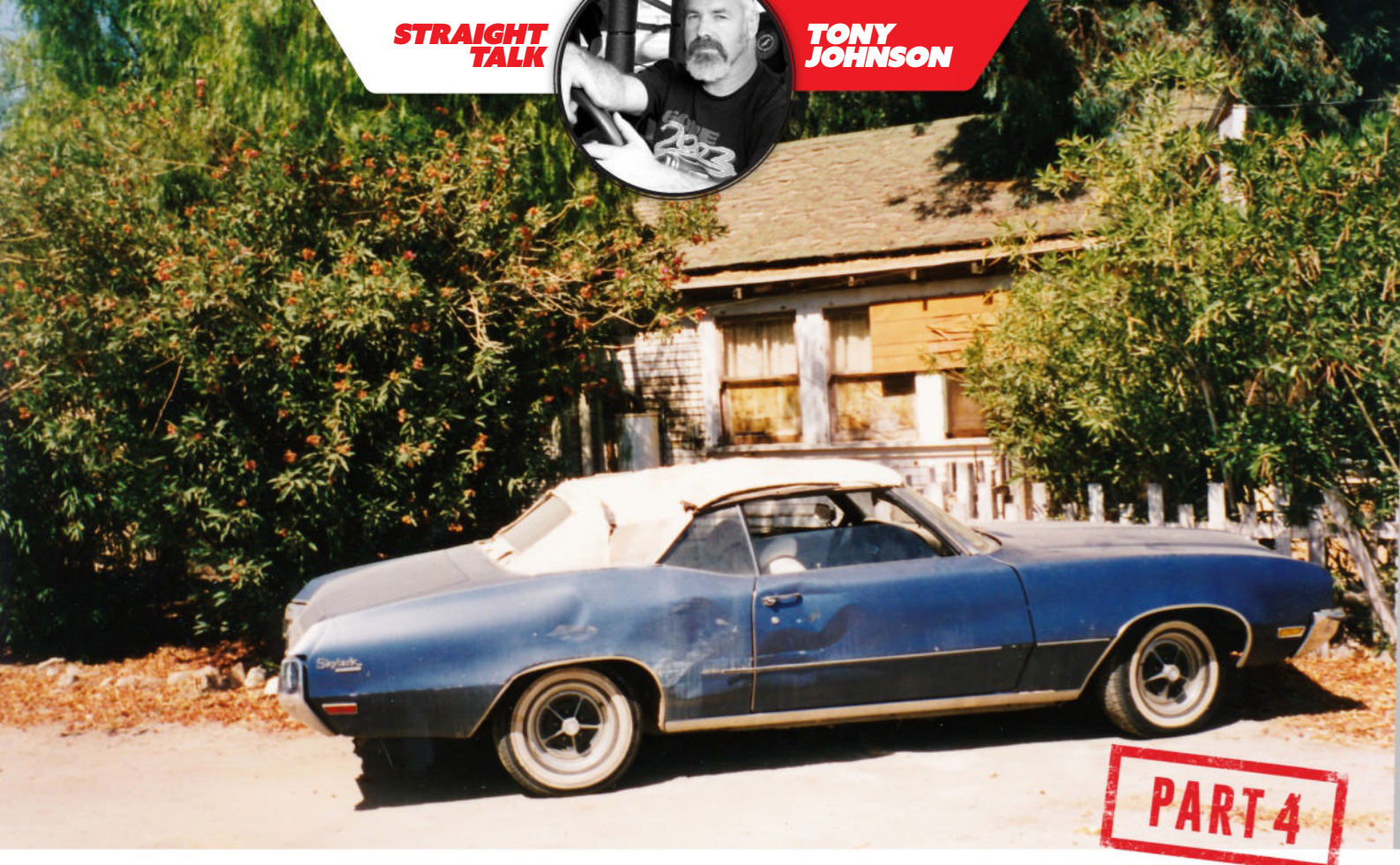


five-point harness fit the bill for safety here.

While a race car's speed is based on how cool it looks (true story), Jordan would not opt for your typical livery. Instead, he'd paint the car himself, being a talented automotive refinisher by day, in Ford's very own Panther Black — the metallic variant, of course, to have the pearl and metallic pop off the body lines of the Falcon — slapping on all the sponsor and supporter decals to top it off.

Not only would this '88 Ford Falcon be fully race ready for the GTRNZ, but it could also race in the GT Cup or even the Allcomers class. Whatever class Jordan ends up in, it'd be sure to be a track weapon — which we'd probably read about in motorsport news in years to come as a top contender with the vast moves Jordan's making in his motorsport career to date. **V8**





HUNTING T-REX

The Hunt for T-Rex had led us, eventually, to the small Southern Californian town of Taft, where we'd systematically searched the streets and found the white 1959 Cadillac that we'd learnt about through popular Bakersfield and Los Angeles hot rodding mythology. Mark II and I had tried in vain to charm and befriend the 'crazy old lady' who owned the Cadillac, as we stood beside the rickety lean-to under which the car had sat for more than a decade. And then, in the space of 60 seconds, as Virginia's estranged husband and now redomiciled companion Kevin suddenly arrived to see what was going on, we'd gone from being all out of legitimate conversation and ready to give up and go back to Bakersfield, to sitting in Virginia's lounge drinking gin and lemonade with them like old friends...

Mark II and I both had similar upbringings growing up in Whanganui; we came from good families, we each lived in a decent home, and our environments were clean and tidy. Like most people. So, walking into Virginia's house was something that neither of us had ever experienced first-hand before. We'd seen places like this on TV, but not in real life. A strong, stale smell was the first thing to hit us as we walked inside the house, followed by a bewildering darkness considering it was early afternoon on a blue-sky day. There were no lights on in the house, and for reasons not immediately apparent to us there was unusually little light coming in through the windows. All throughout the house there were piles of newspapers and garments and general junk stacked waist and chest high

everywhere, and through every room we had to navigate a path between and around these precariously stacked piles of... basically... rubbish. Clearly, nothing was ever thrown out. There was a week's worth of unwashed dishes spilling out of the sink and all across the bench, and empty beer bottles and gin bottles standing anywhere there was a gap.

As our eyes began adjusting to the dim light, we worked out why it was so dark in there; as Virginia and Kevin went to organise some drinks, Mark II elbowed me discreetly and pointed to the windows. This was something I've never forgotten: over every window in the entire house were layers and layers and layers of newspaper, taped to the inside of the glass. It took a moment to make sense of it, but we realised it was to combat the hot Californian climate. This was a poor area, these were poor people, and there was no air conditioning. So, their solution — as perhaps it was for others, though Mark II had never seen it before during many years of living in Bakersfield — was to tape newspaper over the inside of the windows to reduce the sun's heat coming through them. As the beating California sunshine started to bake the newspaper, making it brittle and causing it to disintegrate, rather than clean off the old newspaper, Virginia would just tape another layer over the old layer, over, and over, and over again. All around the walls of the house, beneath every window, lay 10 or 20 years-worth of crumbled newspaper particles and dust, which had never been vacuumed up — just accumulating.

It was into this entirely foreign environment

that Mark II and I sat down, after moving enough piled-up old clothes off the couch to provide a seating space for each of us, and began drinking — in the early hours of the afternoon — our first of many gin and lemonades. There were no choices; that was what we were given. The gin was too strong — even for Mark II (that's saying something) — and tasted dreadful, but you do what you have to do, right? We settled in, and started chatting. The conversation was for the most part with Kevin; he was by far the more social one of the two, and Virginia seemed content to listen in. We talked about New Zealand, the war, and the characteristics of the Kiwis and Australians that Kevin had found so endearing while serving with them in Europe. Thankfully, Virginia never picked up on my introductory lie and enquired as to who my 'relatives in Taft' were. We talked about California, and to a much lesser extent, cars. Kevin had little interest in them, and thought Virginia should get rid of her 'old junk' — namely, the old Ford and the old Cadillac. A tinge of excitement came over me every time Kevin made mention of the idea, but his comments didn't gain traction with the tough old girl. She'd shut him down instantly, and he never pushed the point. He was probably just as frightened of her as Mark II and I were. Although you wouldn't have picked it by looking at the state of her cars, Virginia had a genuine fondness for older American cars, and in her own strange way, clearly loved her '59 Cadillac.

During the conversation, which mostly centred on Kevin and Virginia, they learnt that

Mark II and I were car enthusiasts, and that we 'restored' old cars. We tried to give the impression, of course, that we were responsible restorers, and that a lovely old car like the Cadillac should never be allowed to fall into the hands of — as Virginia referred to them — "those damn hot rodders"!

As the afternoon drifted by, along with a lot of gin and lemonades, it was obvious that Kevin was having a great time and enjoyed our company and I could also sense that Virginia was beginning to feel at ease with having us around, and possibly even liked us a little. Among the many topics of conversation that unfolded that day, the '59 Cadillac would creep in now and then, but Virginia would quickly shift the conversation along onto something else. For Mark II and I, it was a constant tease. We'd think we were on the way to addressing the big subject and then, in a flash, it was gone again. After three or four hours of this, Virginia finally started to stay on the subject, and told us at length about the seemingly endless succession of people (mostly "damn hot rodders") who during the past 10 or 15 years had tried to buy her Cadillac. As she told us her stories, we realised that most of these door knockers followed a similar theme of trying to disillusion her by arrogantly rubbishing the car, telling her how rough it was, and making out as if they were doing her a favour by taking it off her hands for a few hundred dollars. Even back then, that was lowballing in the extreme. Every time someone made an offer, it was in the low hundreds. If she wasn't entirely savvy, or realistic, she also wasn't stupid. Over time, Virginia had become incensed with these people, and eventually came to regard anyone who asked her if the car was for sale as just another — as she put it — "a-hole". Little surprise then that she had developed a reputation for being a 'crazy old lady'. She wasn't crazy, she was just fed up with people more or less trying to steal the car off her. She had never shot anyone like the mythology suggested, but we learned she did make a habit of saying to anyone who asked if the car was for sale to "get



the hell off my property".

So, that was a great insight. We understood the background, and how she felt about guys trying it on. Lesson learnt.

As the day transitioned from mid-afternoon to late afternoon, I still didn't push the conversation too hard about the '59, but tried to provide prompts to get Virginia to talk about it whenever I saw an opportunity. I managed to drop into the conversation somewhere along the way that a 1959 Cadillac was my dream car and one day I'd love to own one, but I could only ever afford to buy one that needed restoration. As soon as I got that point across, I immediately changed the conversation to something else — like living in Taft — but the seed was planted, and I'd done so without her feeling backed into a corner. A little later, we all agreed that the Cadillac was a wonderful old car, and how great it would be if it were to be restored back to its former glory one day...

By now it was around dinner time, but there was no mention of dinner. Just several more

gin and lemonades. I was acutely aware that I needed to avoid getting trashed, and kept pacing myself, without appearing ungracious. Kevin had, after all, already said he'd never met a Kiwi or an Aussie who couldn't drink...

By around 7pm, without any context or lead-in to the question (we were talking about, I think, Bakersfield), Virginia suddenly looked me straight in the eye, and said quite sternly, "I suppose you'd like to buy my Cadillac." It was much more a statement than a question, but I wasn't going to miss the chance. Stifling my excitement at this sudden arrival at the point we'd been hoping to get to for more than eight hours by then, I kept my composure and said, very calmly, "Well, yes I would. If you thought that you'd like to sell it to me." And then, just as quickly as the conversation landed at that critical place, it took off in a different direction once again.

A little later, Virginia said, quite out of the blue as was becoming a pattern for her when discussing the Cadillac, "My Cadillac's worth a lot of money you know." Oh f***, I thought.





After all this, she's going to offer it to me for 10 times what it's worth. Great. Maybe she is crazy. So again, some careful guidance of the subject was required — let's try to get her to understand it's not worth a lot, but without giving offence. "It sure is," I agreed. "A restored car like your Cadillac certainly is worth a lot of money. More than I could ever afford. It's frustrating though," I continued, "that it costs so much to restore them." Ever so casually now... "Really, it costs nearly as much to restore them as they end up being worth, but that doesn't matter too much to me if it costs me what it's eventually worth, because I can do it a bit at a time as I can afford it." Maybe she'd connect the dots and see the situation for what it really was. I couldn't help but feel a growing level of excitement as we moved closer and closer, little by little, to the subject that we dared not confront.

Another gin and lemonade, some more talk about life in California vs life in New Zealand. And more quiet processing in Virginia's mind. I was careful to answer her questions, but to go no further with the conversation than she wanted to. This had to be at her pace, in her time; exactly as she wanted it to play out. She was a tough old chook, and we'd learnt by then that not even Kevin could tell her what she should do.

Half an hour later, the big question finally came. At last! And I was ready for it. Again, eyeing me firmly with a steely gaze, she said, "So... if I decided to sell you my Cadillac, how much would you pay me for it?" This time it really was a question. A very straight question, and it required a very straight answer. There was no doubt I was going to get one shot at having this conversation go my way. This was a woman who wasn't going to haggle. If she didn't like my answer, the conversation would be over — and I had no doubt in my mind whatsoever that she'd just tell Mark II and me to go. Immediately. I'd been thinking this through and already had the answer, helped by the conversation about the lowballers. I was just completely honest with her, based on what I thought the car was really worth, and what I could afford. "Actually, I've already thought about this," I said. "I've worked out how much money I've got, and how much

money I need to last me until I fly back to New Zealand in a few days. If I put together every dollar I can get my hands on, I could give you \$2,650." I said nothing more, and just left it at that. Let her think about it. In truth it was probably worth somewhere around that figure. Again, she didn't flinch, or smile, or say anything. She gave nothing away. She should have been a poker player. By now, I thought this really could happen, and I could scarcely contain my excitement. I swapped knowing

**"...AIN'T SELLIN'
IT TO THOSE DAMN
HOT RODDERS..."**

glances with Mark II, and even though it wasn't going to be his car, I could see that he was excited by it all too. Perhaps in part it's that ingrained human hunting instinct at work.

Virginia just went quiet again, thinking it all through. Kevin, bless him, broke the slightly awkward silence and got another chat going with us about those bloody German bastards over in France in 1944. This time however, there wasn't another long wait for the next move on the chess board. At the first break in the conversation between Kevin and Mark II and I, she said to me, just as sternly as she'd been all day, "If I let you buy my Cadillac, when would you give me that \$2,650?" Wow! My mind was racing and my heart was beating faster. We were there! We've done this! Calmly, I said, "I could give you some of it right now, and I'll give you the rest of it tomorrow morning. Would that be okay?" I figured that this was a lot of money for Virginia, which on its own wouldn't have got it across the line, but the combination of getting to like us well enough, and the fact we were offering her a fair price and not trying to give her a quarter or less of what it was worth, was

ticking her boxes. And clearly an immediate transaction with no hassles helped.

By now it was around 9pm, Mark II and I were pissed (him more so than me), we were hungry, and as nice as Kevin and Virginia were in their own unusual way, we were ready to head back to Bakersfield — and no doubt celebrate with a few Coors.

Far out, it was done! It sure had been a strange day. By early evening, I'd started to think that it was almost as if Virginia knew where this was going the whole day, and was allowing it to go in that direction, but only as long as it unfolded at her pace, and as she dictated. And of course, if she liked us enough. I could be wrong on that, but it's hard to imagine that she couldn't see why we were still there eight or nine hours after Kevin had invited us inside for a drink.

I wanted to pull out my wallet and give her the cash right at that moment, but held back so that she could maintain control of the situation. She stood up, and looked at us both. Here it comes, she's going to ask me something like, "How much money will you give me now?" But no... She said something quite different to that: "Well, I'd like to sell you my Cadillac, but I can't." What the f***?! "There's a man who lives up in Fresno who wants my Cadillac," she explained, matter-of-factly enough for us to know that there wasn't any point in arguing. "He's a travelling salesman, you see," she continued, "and he calls by and visits me every time he comes through Taft, pretty much every three or four months, and he tells me every time, if I ever decide to sell my Cadillac, he'd like me to call him first. He's been visiting me for about 10 years now. I always promised him I would, so I'm going to do that tonight. I have his phone number. He gives it to me every time he visits, you know."

I felt like someone had just kicked me in the nuts. Disbelief. Shock. Anger almost. I'd just spent all bloody day drinking gin and lemonade — I bloody hate gin and lemonade — to help this crazy old lady decide to sell the Cadillac to someone else! I was speechless. For f***'s sake. Stay calm... don't say anything you might regret... What does it matter if I say something I regret? I've missed out on it now anyway.

I could see Mark II was in a state of disbelief, and lucky for me he was there with me and no one else. Anyone else would have said exactly what I was thinking. We both stayed calm as a huge cloud of silence enveloped the room, and one of us quietly said, "We'd better get going now." "You can call me in the morning," said Virginia, her tone and demeanour no different than it had been all that day and night. She handed me a piece of paper with a barely legible phone number scrawled across it. "I'll let you know about the man in Fresno." F*** the man in Fresno, I thought. We've just talked Virginia into selling it to him. The prick owes us a day of our lives back...

We said goodbye, shook Kevin's hand, assuming we'd never see him again, and walked down the dark unlit path to the car. I can't remember how our conversation on the way back to Bakersfield went, but I'm pretty sure Mark II and I weren't telling jokes.

I don't know why, but I did ring Virginia the next morning to hear all about the man in Fresno. I'll tell you about it in the next issue... **VB**



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SUPER, SUPER DUTY

A BIG MOTOR CRAMMED INTO A SMALL ECONOBOX IS A SUREFIRE WAY TO GO FAST

Quite a few issues back now, we looked at Pontiac's famous Swiss Cheese Catalinas — purpose-built factory race cars that had been lightened to within an inch of their lives in order to get down the quarter mile as quickly as possible.

Thanks to a big 421ci Super Duty powerplant and hole saw-based weight-saving measures,

the full-size Catalinas did well — but they also suffered a lot of breakages thanks to their extreme diets, and, what's more, you can drill as many holes in a chassis as you like but a big car is always going to be a big car.

Pontiac engineers had learnt a lot from the cheesy Catalinas, and were desperate to take things to the next level with a more compact

and better balanced car. Taking inspiration from Mickey Thompson's home-brewed 421-repowered Tempest race car from earlier in the year, the engineers formed a grand plan. The problem — as always seems to be the case in this column — was GM's impending total ban on racing.

Word had gotten out about the upcoming restrictions as 1962 came to a close, so as a team, Pontiac's engineers decided to forgo their Christmas break (we're sure their families must have been pleased) and post up in the workshop to build as many race cars with their new and improved formula as they could before the ban came into effect in January.

The result was the rarest factory-built Pontiac race cars of them all, the 1963 Tempest 421 Super Duty, aimed squarely at NHRA's Factory Experimental class. A total of two prototype coupes and 12 production cars were made before the corporate hammer dropped — six coupes and six wagons — and far fewer still exist today.

The 1961–1963 Tempest model was an odd duck with zero sporting pretensions or pedigree. It was small by US standards, bought by thrifty families looking for a budget runabout to get them from A to B at a minimal cost. Although V8 options were offered, they made up only 1 per cent of sales — the lion's share going to the economical four-cylinder model, which should give you an idea as to the intended market of the car.



The Tempest was also interesting to Pontiac's engineers as it utilised an unusual transaxle set-up, meaning a substantial amount of weight had been shifted from the front of the car to the rear — in the era of cross-ply tyres, any grip that could be gained would prove to be a huge advantage come race day. The motor fed power to the transmission through a very odd flexible drive shaft that used a special curved torque tube to get around the fact that the Tempest used the floor plan of the rear-engined Chevy's Corvair, which of course didn't have a transmission tunnel.

Mickey Thompson's Tempest build did away with the factory transaxle, flexible drive shaft, and independent rear suspension in favour of the traditional solid axle set-up, Pontiac's engineers wanted to keep the rear end as it was and use it to their advantage. However, as you might expect, a transmission designed for an economy car wasn't going to stand up to the kind of torque Pontiac's biggest, baddest motor was putting out.

The engineers took the original two-speed transaxle box and grafted a second set of up-rated planetary gears to the rear of the housing, then replaced the torque converter with a unique hydraulic clutch. The clutch was used to select first and reverse gears, while the driver needed to manually shift into second, third, and fourth. The differential was also modified so that it was permanently locked.

Knowing that this new 'Powershift' transmission, as it was coined, could be a potential problem area, Pontiac's engineers smartly cut a hole in the boot floor of the Tempests and fabricated a cover that could easily be removed to allow access to the planetary gears. Because the modified transmission was also longer than the original, a substantial notch was also taken out of the fuel tank, cutting the car's fuel capacity nearly in half.



Because all Pontiac V8s of the time had the same exterior dimensions and the Tempest was available with an eight-cylinder option, the special 421ci Super Duty motor dropped right into the engine bay without any massaging required. Rated at 405hp (though realistically more like 460hp), the four-bolt mains Super Duty ran a 12.0:1 compression ratio with forged steel rods, forged alloy pistons, a forged steel crankshaft, and a McKellar camshaft with 308/320 degrees of duration and a 0.450-inch valve lift. Heavily modified heads allowed for a much-increased flow rate, and the extra air and >

**THE RESULT WAS THE
RAREST FACTORY-
BUILT PONTIAC RACE
CARS OF THEM ALL**





TODAY, ONLY FIVE TEMPEST SUPER DUTIES ARE KNOWN TO STILL EXIST

fuel were provided by dual four-barrel carbs sitting on unique intake manifolds. Exhaust gases were pumped out through aluminium tubular headers that ended in slip joints so the rest of the exhaust system could be bypassed come race day.

While the smaller Tempest was already lighter than those that had come before it, there was still much more that could be done to reduce weight. As such, aluminium versions of the original stamped steel body panels and pieces forward of the A-pillar were fabricated and fitted, while the front screen was replaced with acrylic, lightweight bumpers mounted, heater and radio deleted, and sound deadening removed.

The end result was a wickedly fast and unique high-11/low-12-second car that provided superior traction to anything else in the Factory Experimental category. It was a full second quicker than the regular 421-powered Catalina and just as quick, if not a little

quicker, than the fragile, bendy Swiss Cheese Catalinas that had come before it. Every example was delivered in an appliance-white hue with a blue interior.

Today, only five Tempest Super Duties are known to still exist and only one of those is a wagon — which was by far the fastest factory-built station wagon of its era, of course. Of those five cars, only one of each body style has been restored to its original specifications after decades of painstaking parts collection and restoration work.

With that said, there's nothing to say that another example won't turn up one day — a case in point was the last coupe to surface not too long ago in 2008. The seller had tried to send it to a scrap yard along with a bunch of other junk cars he was getting rid of, and it was only saved by the fact that the truck ran out of room. Instead, he decided to throw it on eBay with a \$500 reserve. The car was in extremely poor condition and no longer even had the aluminium front body panels on it, but eagle-eyed enthusiasts quickly spotted some telltale signs that this may well be a long-lost Super Duty Tempest. After a flurry of calls to experts and VIN checks, it was deemed to be genuine and the bidding rocketed up from \$500 to over \$221,000 — imagine the grin and/or confusion on that guy's face as he watched the bidding ramp up out of control!

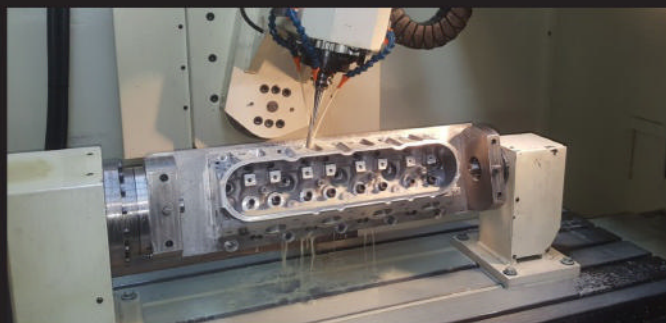
So, if you happen to have any old Pontiacs lying around, it might be time to check the VIN number — you know — just in case. **V8**



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A GRAND OPPORTUNITY

Back in late January saw us heading back to the USA briefly to display Project 29 at the Grand National Roadster Show, which was the first week of February. As usual, I look up what other events or attractions are taking place in our travel window. The last week of January advertised the Mooneyes New Years Drags & Show which was perhaps one of the largest one-day-only events I have attended in the USA. There were 150 race

cars from dragsters to gassers, over 1000 show cars with much diversity and a whopping 9000 spectators through the gate of Irwindale Raceway! We went to this not knowing what to expect and it was a mind blower. We left just after midday and people were still pouring in to enjoy the cars, the music, the vendors and the racing. The diversity of cars and bikes on display was very impressive from low riders to hot rods, customs to restored cars,

Volkswagens to Chevs and every other marquee in between—just unreal.

With Project 29 based at Squeak Bell's in Bakersfield, it was time to get ready for the big one. A grand opportunity arose for me to display my Model A pickup at the Grand National Roadster Show in Pomona California, USA. This show is the granddaddy of them all and attracts over 600 vehicles displayed indoors and over 1100 vehicles show up each day to be displayed outside. It has been a bucket list thing to attend all these great USA hot rod events with my own New Zealand built hot rod and the Grand National Roadster Show was no exception. I join a short list of a very few Kiwis who have displayed at this prestigious show.

To recap, my 1929 Model A Ford pickup was built here in New Zealand between 2002 and 2009. I did a majority of the work on it myself with a lot of great help from Dad, family and friends and eventually we showcased the final incarnation of it in the *New Zealand Hot Rod* magazine as "Project 29". In 2009 I reluctantly sold it to a guy in Utah, USA and subsequently it passed on to two more owners in Idaho, USA. I really never thought I would see the car again but in 2020 I was able to locate it in Idaho and by 2021 I was able to reach a point where I could purchase it back. Ex pat Kiwi, Squeak Bell of Bakersfield, California picked it up for me and has kindly stored it at his place since then.

To recharge the mind and body last year, I ticked off a few bucket list events in the USA with





Project 29 and have a lot of memories to last a lifetime. Sure it costs money and time but with the way the world has changed so much over the last three years, we all gotta do these things as we can before it's all too late. The opportunity to display at the Grand National Roadster Show back in February was an experience I will never forget. Another opportunity arose when I was able to display Project 29 alongside the car of a very inspiring man to me in the world of hot rodding.

Jim 'Jake' Jacobs inspired Project 29 and my fun with Model A's immensely. Jake is one of the co-founders of Pete & Jakes Hot Rod Parts, worked for Ed Roth in the sixties as well as the now defunct *Rod & Custom* magazine. He is a totally humble guy despite his large contribution to the hot rod industry. Most proudly for me, he is a great friend and a genuine one at that. To display our cars together was special – he had just completed the most gorgeous Model A roadster with exquisite detailing. The cars looked great together. ➤



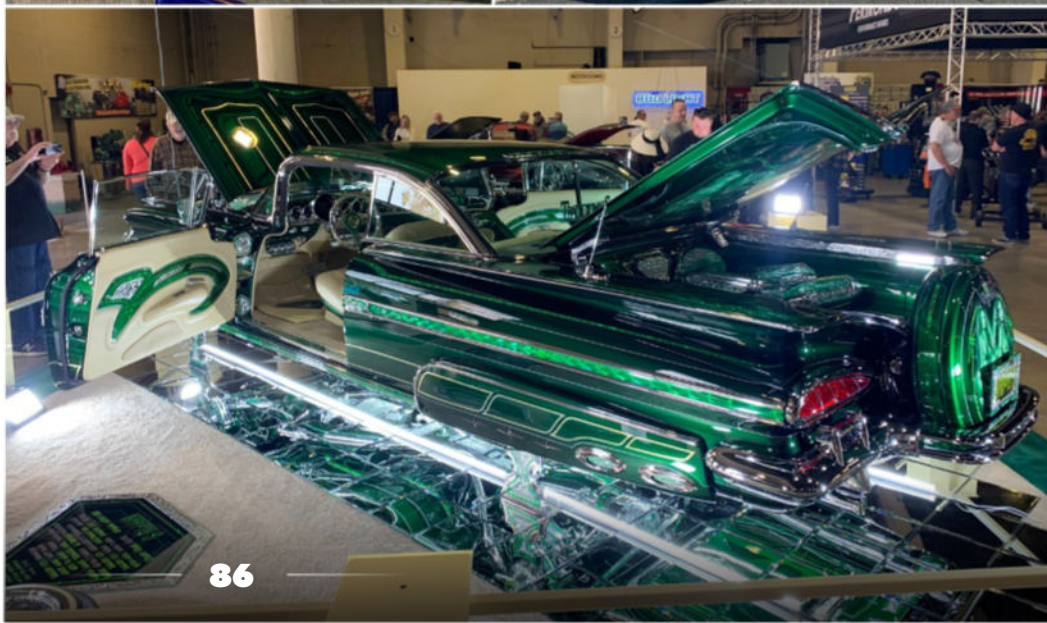
THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISPLAY AT THE GRAND NATIONAL ROADSTER SHOW BACK IN FEBRUARY WAS AN EXPERIENCE I WILL NEVER FORGET.





The show runs Friday to Sunday with setup days on the Wednesday and Thursday. We left Bakersfield early Thursday morning and headed down to Pomona arriving around 10am and waited for Jake to show so we could drive in together. Although it was winter in the USA at that time, bright blue Southern California skies were a stark contrast to the images of devastating flooding (pre cyclone Gabrielle) we were seeing online! The setup day went smoothly and it was most enjoyable to check out all the other world class vehicles. Some costing millions of dollars — a stark contrast to my worn-in 15-year-old build from New Zealand. It was a pleasant surprise to receive a Class Participation Award for Project 29. The feedback was heart warming also — yep, another neat bucket list event ticked off.

The major awards at the Grand National Roadster Show are the America's Most Beautiful Roadster for pre 1937 bodied roadsters and then there is the Al Slonaker Memorial Award for everything non roadster. Both of these awards are sponsored by ARP Fasteners and the winners of each receive a cheque for \$12,500! Both awards are something you specifically have to enter to be a contender and the competition is fierce and this year was no exception. For two years previously I have been fortunate to judge the America's Most Beautiful Roadster Award and the whole experience is like nothing else and a big eye opener to the big old world of hot rodding. The 2023 America's Most Beautiful Roadster winner was Jack Chisenhall's '32 Ford roadster finished by Brizio's. The Al Slonaker Award winner was George and Angela Eliacostas' '60 Buick by Cal Automotive Creations. Make plans to be at this show next year — it doesn't disappoint! **V8**



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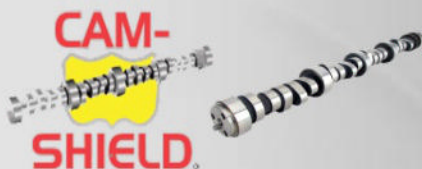
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WANT TO HAVE YOUR COOL STREETER FEATURED IN OUR MAG? NOT A SHOW CAR BUT STILL HAS STREET CRED AND WORTHY OF A MENTION? FROM DAILIES TO WEEKEND WARRIORS, LET'S SEE WHAT YOU'RE DRIVING. EMAIL: EDITOR@NZV8.CO.NZ

WORDS: RIXSTA SAMMONS PHOTOS: SUPPLIED



DAVE STEVENSON

1984
CHEV C20

LOCATION: WHATAWHATA

THANKS: BRENT SHEPARD,
SHAYNE, RAY GARRETT,
LAWRENCE SMITH,
MA PETERO, IAN QUAYLE,
AND MY PATIENT WIFE
YVETTE

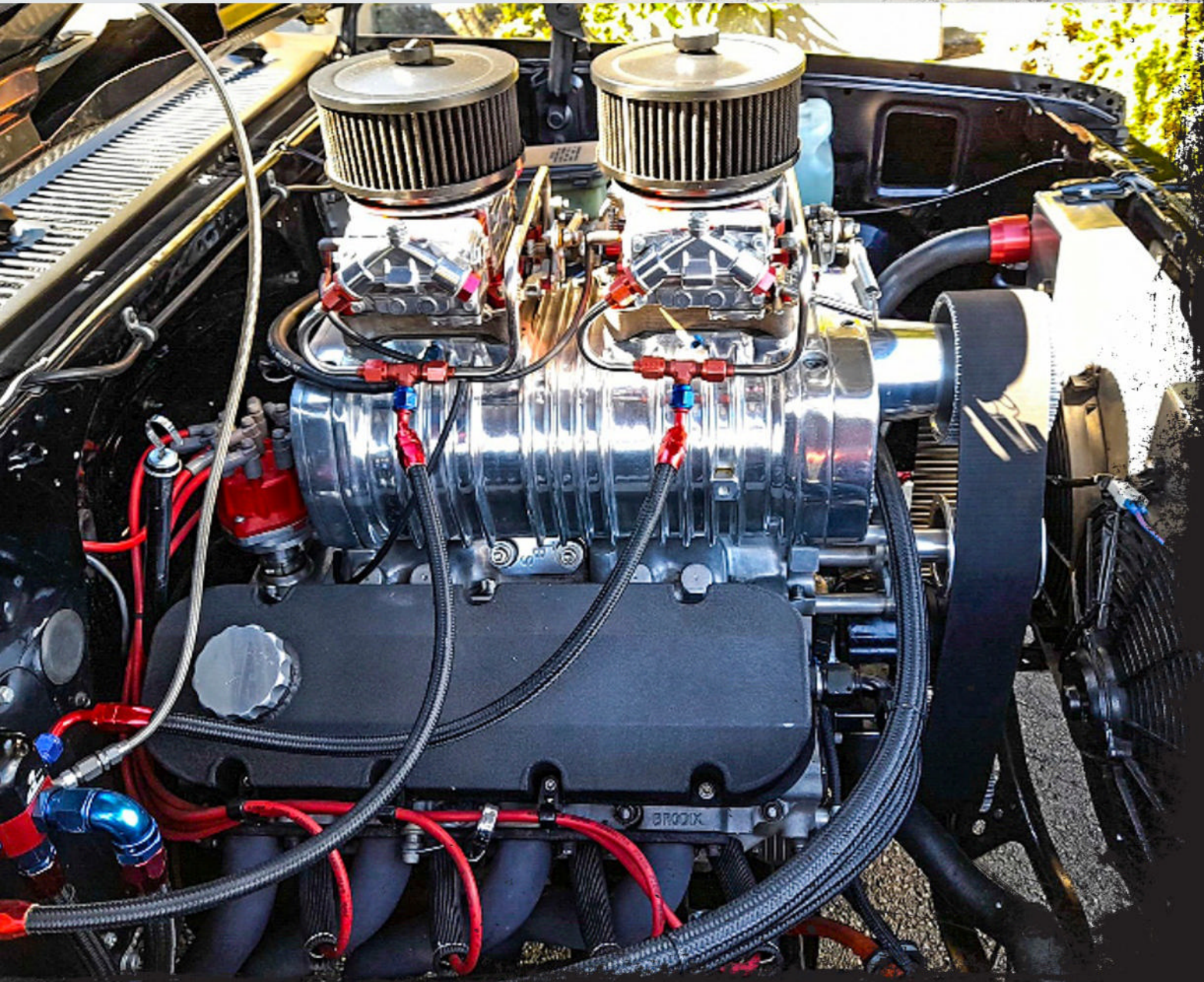
This is an interesting tale, as I can vividly recall seeing the truck cruising the streets of my hometown of Upper Hutt, a city 40 minutes outside of Wellington, thinking, *That's pretty sweet*. I've often wondered what became of it, as I haven't seen it rolling the 5018 for quite some time. Well, it turns out there is a good reason for that — it was sold to Dave Stevenson, who is the current owner. While I can recall it having a couple of stacks poking out of the top of the hood, what Dave has done to it since is remarkable, turning the already-tough streeter into a pretty wild ride.

Dave bought it from the previous owner in Wellington during the summer of 2021, and it spent a couple

NZV8
READERS'
Rides

of summers racking up smiles per miles with Dave in Whatawhata until June of 2022, when he took it off the road for a spruce up. Already kitted out with a B&M supercharger 496ci big block Chev, the paint, interior, and wheels were on the list to be personalised to Dave's liking. Although the truck was taken off the road in June, this left a tight deadline for the 2022 Repco Beach Hop that Dave had intentions of taking it to once completed. What followed was a complete panel and paint job in black cherry pearl by Brent Shepherd and the team at Harvey Collision Repairs, along with a full interior makeover in black leather with charcoal diamond stitch for the seats and door panels, new carpet, and hood lining from Shayne at Master Trim Ltd, while also fitting a set of polished 20x8-inch front and 20x9.5-inch rear billet US Mags wheels supplied by Top Town and tyres to match in just under six months. Yes, it was a tight deadline ... really tight. On the Wednesday of the week of Beach Hop, Dave was rolling it through for a WOF and then making some final adjustments to the ride height before driving to Whangamatā on the Thursday. While it was a push to get it all together, Dave says it was all worth it and is happy with the outcome.

Thanks for writing in Dave — awesome truck, and cool to see where it ended up. >



NZV8 READERS' Rides



**JUSTIN BOOBYER
AND RACH HYETT**

1969 DODGE CORONET SUPER BEE TRIBUTE

LOCATION: WELLINGTON

THANKS:
GAVIN HARRIS
FROM MOPOWER
PERFORMANCE,
ANDREW AT BELT UP
COMPLIANCE,
JULIAN CHEER
CERTIFICATION, AND ALL
OUR MATES WHO
GAVE ADVICE

The depths of Trade Me and Facebook Marketplace frequently present a deal for the diligent hunter, and this was very much the case for Justin Boobyer and Rach Hyett when they came across a '69 Dodge Coronet — not in New Zealand though, but across the Pacific in a small village in Wisconsin called Ogdensburg. After a friend checked it over, giving it the thumbs up, it was chucked in a shipping container bound for the Pacific with tags for the homeland. Wrecking the welcome-home party, was the world's favourite virus — the car had to be held at the Los Angeles (LA) port for five months while the country was in a bad state of affairs, meaning Justin and Rachel didn't get to bring their newfound possession home to Wellington from Auckland port until late December 2021.

While the car had a bit of rust and damage that needed to be repaired to pass compliance, Justin was able to tackle these himself as an ex-panel beater with the necessary skill set. After rebuilding the

suspension, gearbox, and clutch along with the rust repairs at home over six months, the car passed with flying colours, gaining LVV certification deeming it fit for New Zealand roads.

As for the finer details of the car, it's fitted with a 440ci Mopar with an 18-spline four-speed gearbox that's matched up to a Dana 60 complete with 3.45:1 diff gears. For wheels and suspension, a classy set of 15-inch steelies all round, and keeping the ride looking right is a set of QA1 shocks and RT rear springs. Other cool touches are the fibreglass lift-off hood and the nice set of R/T Coronet buckets in the cockpit to keep the couple firmly planted. Although Justin and Rach say this car is only a tribute — and it needs a few more parts fitted to make it an accurate tribute — for what they had to begin with, it sure is a bloody good start.

Thanks for writing in, guys! This is one tough readers' ride — we can't wait to see what it looks like in time.





DAN PEARCE

1970 VALIANT UTE

LOCATION: **INVERCARGILL**

Finding two Valiant utes in the same area would be a fluke, considering they are few and far between. Well, as fate would have it, it must have been Dan's lucky day when he stumbled across two of them in a shed in the deep south of Invercargill, just shy of where he lives. He was there to buy a rusted-yet-original patina green ute when he noticed one hanging off the rotisserie. In need of a complete restoration, there was a fair bit of work left to get it back on the road, but what was going for it was that all the rust repairs had been done, along with the underside having been painted.

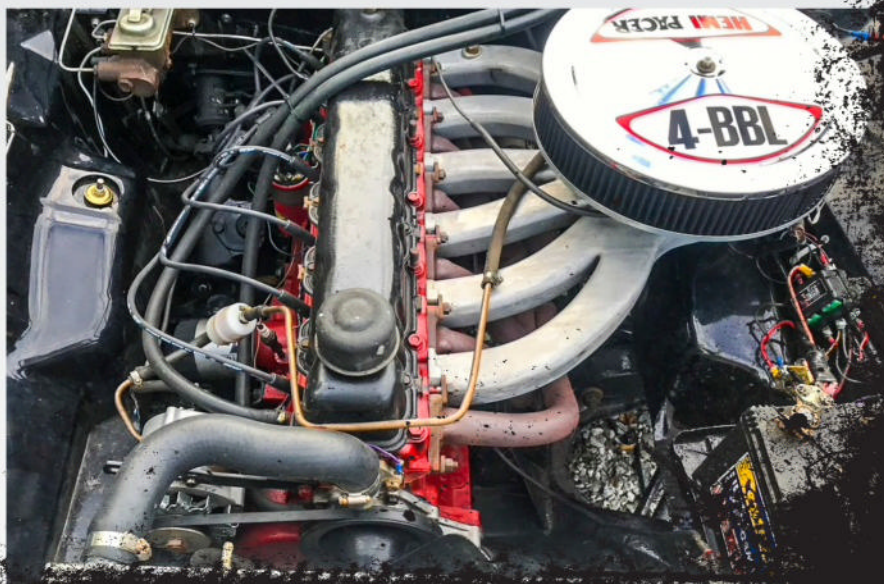
Thomas, the owner of the two Valiant utes for sale, sold Dan the patina green one first, and Dan outfitted a 360ci LA, alloy heads, a four-speed A833 gearbox, and a Dodge LSD in it. While there were plenty of good times in it over the course of six months, the one on the rotisserie back in Thomas' shed was keeping Dan awake at night. Returning six months later, he had to have it, but there was a slight issue — no running gear. The only way it was coming off the rotisserie was with a K-frame suspension and a diff, and although Thomas had a few parts to spare, Dan decided to sacrifice the patina green ute's running gear to get the other mobile and back home. With Dan having two non-driving utes at home now, the patina green one later received an overhaul, with new big brakes, an upgraded diff, and new suspension arms and shocks. The ute that was a bare shell still obviously had a ways to go.

However, just 18 months later, the now-shiny black Valiant ute has had a complete rebuild. Dan says every nut and bolt has been stripped, cleaned, and painted, alongside the addition of new brake and fuel lines, sway

bars, brakes, shocks, and suspension. It's also running a semi-worked 265ci Hemi, a three-speed gearbox, and an LSD with 3:23.1 gears. Dan has put 10,000km on the clock in the past year, including those from Playday: The Southern Tour, which consists of six track days at southern racetracks, including two days each at Teretonga, Timaru International Motor Raceway, and Euromarque Motorsport Park (Ruapuna), and the old girl hasn't missed a beat. Driven not hidden, built not bought, as Dan says.

Thanks for writing in Dan, what a cool couple of utes you have there! >

THANKS: WIFE VICKY; TERRY MC; BAZ; ROLLY; REX AND ROG AT PROBUILD; KIRBY, FOR THE SEAT, DOOR, AND KICK PANELS; BREN AND SCOTT AT SUITE SOUTHERN, FOR THE INTERIOR FIT OUT; NATHAN AND JEFF AT MAGOO'S; JIM AT BNT; STEVE AT AUTOFAB AND BLAIR AT BEARING REPLACEMENTS; SOUTH CLASSIC SPARES SHINY BITS, FOR CHROME BUMPERS



NZVB READERS' Rides



**PAUL HAMMOND
/ REB RACER**

1971 PLYMOUTH CUDA 340

LOCATION: AUCKLAND

**THANKS: WITHOUT THE
SUPPORT OF MY FAMILY AND
FRIENDS OVER THE YEARS, I
COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT**

Over the years, we have heard of some unusual places to find rare cars, such as barns and abandoned buildings, but never before have we heard of one being discovered in a cabinetmaker's shop. The year 1989 was when Paul first heard about the car's location and travelled to the cabinetmaker's shop to buy the man's abandoned project — a 1971 Cuda. The car was covered in about three inches of MDF dust in the back of the shop, but it had the advantage of having all matching-numbers running gear and bodywork that had been worked on up to the primer stage. Towing the car home that day created a dust trail that extended all the way down the highway — there was so much dust that you could have followed the trail all the way to Paul's house.

Once home, it was decided to strip the car even further in order to rebuild all of the running gear, brakes, and steering. After getting it back into running and driving condition, Paul painted it Dulon Red in his garage — a good ol' '90s garage respray! On the inside, the car still had its original upholstery and carpeting, which only required cleaning and reaffixing. A rip in the seats necessitated covering the fronts with cloth to protect Paul's legs from the sun. After applying the Repco billboard stripes and a few other factory repro details in the garage, the car was in a state where it could be driven to the local drag strip for a test run — Paul had always intended for it to be a street-legal drag car.

The car ran a 15.2 on its first outing at the track, and, over the course of a few years of tuning the motor and chassis, Paul got the 340ci and stock chassis down to a 12.7. After a few more years and a trip to the US, Paul returned with the parts to build a big block 451ci. He was back on the track, this time with more cubes to play with after swapping out the numbers-matching 340ci for the

new 451ci power plant. Straight out of the gate, he ran an 11.7, which was more than enough to qualify for the newly created 11.90 class. Later on, after upgrading the car's camshaft, he was able to enter the 10-second bracket and move up to Pro Street class, which he eventually won in its final year of competition before the NZDRA discontinued it in favour of a new classification system.

Ten years passed, and Paul had retired the car and pulled the engine to use in another car he had. He was talking to good friend and well-known photographer Maria Panova one day when she mentioned that she was interested in getting back into drag racing, having had a history of racing in Russia before coming to live in New Zealand. Paul pulled the car out of hibernation and bought a new engine from the US for it, and got Maria racing again. Sadly, the engine Paul had bought turned out to be a piece of shit, so, retaining just the heads, the rest was swapped out for a new combo. The '71 Plymouth Cuda can now be seen running a 400 big block stroked to 512ci, backed up by a 5600 high stall to get it off the line — which it does with ease. The engine is slightly detuned for the NSDW 11.00 class limit, but, with the right conditions and a sticky track, the Cuda can make a 10.5 ET pass with ease.

Although this car has a long history — it spent the majority of its time as a dragster, was dormant for 10 years, and is now back on the track with a new driver still making quick passes — Paul is most impressed by the fact that he can restore it to its factory-matching condition, preserving all of the original components. That day may never arrive, or we might see this mighty Cuda live out its years on the 1320, but one thing is certain: this readers' ride is a seriously cool street-legal drag car. What a car, what a story, Paul! Thanks for reaching out. **VB**

SOCIAL SCENE

WORDS: MATT ELLIOTT — LOW FAST FAMOUS

Here are some quick hits of content from social media channels around the globe, curated by Low Fast Famous. They relate to some of the projects and completed builds that have been generating the most interaction and impressions in the past 30 days. Check out more of the work from the vehicles highlighted via their Instagram handles listed or at Low Fast Famous: @lowfastfamous



LINCOLN CONTINENTAL @THATRAWLINCOLN

The team at Exile Fabrications have gone to the next level with this Lincoln build that is nearing paint stage. A full custom chassis incorporating cantilever suspension along with Hydroshox from Mittler Bros gets the stance and handling sorted. Twin-turbo LS power sorts out the go and the stopping is taken care of by Wilwood brakes. Some custom wheels from Schott fitted with 19-inch-wide Mickey Thompson tyres at the rear round off the build to date.



1950 CHEVROLET 3100 @MAD_MAX_RN

These '50s Chevrolet trucks sure keep hitting the spot, especially if you are a fan of some patina. This one, built by Dwigths Speed Shop, uses a boxed stock frame along with air suspension managed by Air Lift Performance to get the right stance while it tucks those custom Rotiform wheels. Power is via a lightly modded small block using Holley parts and Wilwood brakes pull the truck to a stop. Pretty cool build.

1971 OLDSMOBILE 442 @PERSONALIZATUAUTO

Can't say we post many convertible cars, so this clean concept is a definite change. Using a Roadster Shop chassis as the base, this 442-equipped machine also has a five-speed Tremec transmission for the ultimate driving experience, and a custom leather interior makes the inside a great place to be. All that is before the one-off Forgeline wheels get fitted to round off the project.



1968 CHEVROLET CAMARO @SKYLER_SPEED

One thousand-plus horsepower in some classic American muscle is a sure-fire winner in our book. This LS3-based twin-turbo-powered machine is a great time, particularly when paired with the manual transmission. Suspension components from Detroit Speed sort the handling, before braking components from Wilwood housed inside American Racing wheels haul this build to a stop. Finally, some awesome Antimatter Blue paint completes the build.



Showpiece

MUSCLE AND CLASSIC RESTORATIONS WANTED TO BUILD A CAR TO SHOWCASE THEIR CRAFTSMANSHIP – THIS HEMI-POWERED CHARGER IS THAT AND MORE!

WORDS: TODD WYLIE PHOTOS: ROD DUNN





A REAL DEAL BARN FIND, THE CAR HAD BEEN PARKED UP IN 1977

In the world of tradies, there are two distinct categories: those whose own projects are never completed, and those who are a bit more like Chris Blackmore. As the owner of well-known and highly-regarded Christchurch restoration business, Muscle and Classic Restorations, Chris sets the benchmark with his own builds. Being a true car guy, he's owned a number of great cars over the years, almost all of which have been Mopars. He had an idea though to build a vehicle that could be used as a showpiece for the business to demonstrate what they were capable of, and build it from the ground up with no expense spared, and no set deadline for completion. That meant that rather than rushing to complete the build, it would instead be purposely drawn out to allow customers, and potential customers, to view the build at any given stage, which would give them confidence in what the team were capable of.

Of course, to spin Chris' wheels, it too needed to be a Mopar, and there are few more iconic or desirable than a '68 Dodge Charger. Chris found the perfect foundation for the build in Georgia, USA, in 2005 with just 56,000 miles on the clock. A real deal barn find, the car had been parked up in 1977 before being almost forgotten about.

Once landed in NZ, the build would be almost entirely undertaken within the four walls of Muscle and Classic Restorations, including the initial tear down and media blasting. Rather than just rolling it into the blasting booth though, it was first fitted to a custom-built dolly, and all the exterior panels removed. Chris chimes in, "These Mopar bodies, despite being a good design for the era, are prone to rust, so extensive internal measures were carried out to protect the investment of a restoration." While removing perfectly good panels may seem like overkill, he's right, as you never know what's hiding beneath. There was also the added advantage of being able to get in behind any dents and scrapes the body had and work the metal to remove them without the need for filler. Only once the sheet metal was perfect could it be re-attached to the frames, once everything had been sealed up, of course.

Muscle and Classic Restorations are known for their fit and finish work, and of course the Charger would be no different, with a huge amount of time going in to making sure the gaps were perfect. Chris even went to the extent of fitting the motor and drivetrain back in before setting the gaps, should the body flex at all due to the weight of the running gear. Assisting in that regard are chassis connectors and heavy-duty torque boxes that have been grafted in. Plenty of interior seam welding was also undertaken to ensure that the body is stiffer than when it rolled off the production line.

There's 472 good reasons for that additional strength too... as that's the number of cubic inches the Gen 2 Hemi the car now runs is displacing. ➤



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SPEC

1968 DODGE CHARGER

ENGINE: 472ci Gen 2 Hemi, forged pistons, forged crank, forged rods, 4-bolt mains, Mopar Performance fasteners, Mopar Performance cam, 2.25-inch intake valves, 1.94-inch exhaust valves, twin 600cfm Edelbrock carbs, Edelbrock manifold, custom ram induction system, Holley electric fuel pump, custom fuel lines, Mopar Performance ignition, TTI 2-1/8-inch ceramic-coated headers, twin 3-inch aluminised exhaust, TTI exhaust tips, PWR cross flow radiator, twin electric fans

DRIVETRAIN: Chrysler A-727 transmission, Moser Engineering Dana 60 diff, 3.55:1 diff, custom drive shaft

SUSPENSION: Strengthened K-member, Firm Feel oversized torsion bars, Mopar Performance rear springs, Bilstein shocks, oversized sway bar, poly graphite bushes

BRAKES: Wilwood 6-piston front callipers, Wilwood 4-piston rear callipers, Wilwood master cylinder

WHEELS/TYRES: 18x8-inch and 20x10-inch American Racing two-piece wheels, 245/45R18 and 305/35R20 Mickey Thompson tyres

EXTERIOR: Custom Glasurit paint, AMD glass

CHASSIS: Chassis connectors, heavy-duty torque boxes

INTERIOR: Custom retrim, modified bucket seats, Dakota Digital gauges, custom dash insert, smoothed lower dash, hidden Sony audio

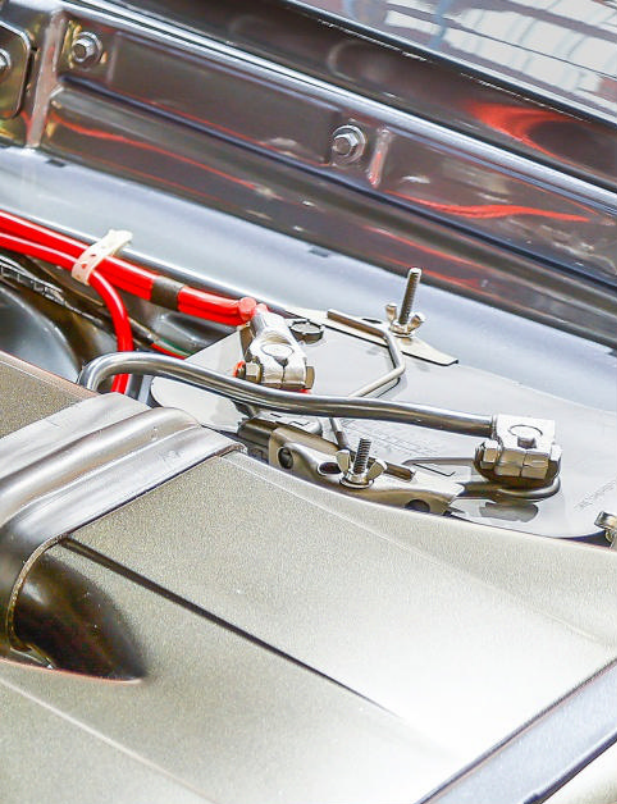
PERFORMANCE: 575hp

That's a whole lot more punch than the 318ci small block the car rolled off the production line with, and with that capacity comes a whole lot more chassis twisting torque.

The engine was purchased as a crate motor off Mopar Performance, but as you can imagine, Chris has been around long enough to know that pulling things down for a closer look can often be a cheaper option than finding out later that the engine was assembled incorrectly. During the teardown he got a good look at the Mopar Performance crank, rods, and pistons, along with the 292-duration 524/507 lift camshaft. It all looked good, and more than capable of producing the claimed 575hp the catalogue states. Part of that performance is due to the twin 600cfm carbs that sit atop an Edelbrock manifold, along with a Mopar Performance ignition set-up that helps fire it all into life.

With the engine coming complete, all that was really left to do to fire it up was add the serpentine belt system along with the TTI ceramic-coated 2-1/8-inch headers.

Of course, none of the finishing work could be done



before the car, including the engine bay, was painted. While Chris did all the metal work himself, which largely focused on keeping the car's iconic shape with just mild tweaks here and there, he's quick to give credit to his team. A lot of that credit goes to Muscle and Classic Restorations' prepper/painter of 20 years, Steve Caton, for his skill in paint preparation. That paint prep work is all done by hand to get a level of finish not achievable by machine. The team took this a step further by test fitting all the chrome trim and rubber weather stripping while the car was in the prep stage to ensure that once it was painted, there were no fit and finish issues.

Scott Blackadder was the man on the spray gun when it finally came time to apply the custom Glasurit paint work. Over a base coat applied through a special paint preparation system developed in-house, five layers of clear were applied. Following that, the vehicle was block wet sanded with three grades of sandpaper, then a final buffing, before a three-step 3M system was applied, designed to give a show level of finish that you see today.

With the painted body still sitting on the dolly, assembly could begin, starting with the underside where every nut and bolt was replaced during assembly. The change to the big Hemi saw Firm Feel torsion bars installed to work along with Mopar Performance rear >

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3M SYSTEM
WAS APPLIED,
DESIGNED TO
GIVE A SHOW
LEVEL OF FINISH
THAT YOU SEE
TODAY**





YOU'LL NEED TO TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT THE DASH TO NOTICE THE CUSTOM WORK THOUGH

springs and Bilstein shocks all round. All bushes were replaced with poly graphite items and a larger front sway bar was also fitted. The braking system was equally as overhauled, with Wilwood six-piston and four-piston callipers being fitted front and rear respectively. It goes without saying that the wheel wells' undercarriage are all painted, while in contrast, the twin 3-inch exhaust that's bolted up is coated in an aluminised finish.

To drop the car back onto the ground, 18x8-inch and 20x10-inch American Racing two-piece wheels were fitted, wrapped in 245/45R18 and 305/35R20 Mickey Thompson tyres.

Wanting to have a somewhat original look, albeit subtly improved, Chris put plenty of thought into how to go about the interior. This included modifying the factory bucket seats before having them recovered in leather by

Wayne at Patrick Auto Trimmers, who also assisted with the Legendary Interior trim kit for the doors, carpet, and headliner. You'll need to take a closer look at the dash to notice the custom work though, such as the smoothed lower dash, and the billet machined dash face which houses Dakota Digital gauges. Hidden out of view is a Sony audio system installed by Glen at GCR, who also installed the right level of security system for such a build. The finishing touch was completing the custom in-house designed air conditioning system.

With so many builds under its belt, the team at Muscle and Classic Restoration know a thing or two about what parts are worth repairing, and what parts are worth replacing. With this in mind, they ordered a complete new glass kit from AMD. The front grille, on the other hand, is an original item that has been refurbished to the



DRIVER

CHRIS BLACKMORE

AGE: 53

OCCUPATION: Owner Muscle and Classic Restorations

PREVIOUSLY OWNED CARS: '73 Dodge Challenger, '58 Plymouth Fury, '64 Imperial, '78 Chrysler New Yorker, '76 Dodge Monaco

DREAM CAR: '59 Imperial two-door

WHY THE CHARGER? THE '68 CHARGERS ARE A PERSONAL FAVOURITE

BUILD TIME: Four years

LENGTH OF OWNERSHIP: 18 years

CHRIS THANKS: The team at Muscle and Classic Restorations, Steve Caton for his skill in paint prep, Scott Blackadder for the base and clear coat application, Wayne at Patrick Auto Trimmers, Canterbury Radiator and Air Conditioning, Ian Smith of Smithy's Modified Vehicle Certifications, Neil Hessen Repair Certifications, Paul's Chrome Plating USA, Eric Livingstone at West Auckland Engine Reconditioners.



extent it has the factory-correct shade of satin black paint, with the factory-correct Argent Silver surround and fin edges. Thankfully, it was easy enough to find high-quality reproductions of the park light, side marker lights, and tail light assemblies.

All up, the build took around four years, spread over a much longer period as customer jobs would always take precedence, and having the Charger on display in an unfinished condition was more beneficial than a hindrance. Now it's all done though, Chris has set his sights on his next Mopar project, so has put the Charger up for grabs. With the number of hours that have gone into it, there's no way you could replicate it for the asking price, and even if you did, you'd be waiting years for the process to unfold. Chris says it's done its job though, so here's hoping the lucky new owner appreciates the attention to detail that's gone into it, as they're unlikely to find another built to this level. **VB**

Consistency IS PROVING TO BE KEY

ROUND THREE OF THE NAPA CENTRAL MUSCLE CARS SAW TEAMS AND DRIVERS HEAD TO HAMPTON DOWNS OVER WAITANGI WEEKEND AS PART OF THE 67TH RUNNING OF THE NEW ZEALAND GRAND PRIX

WORDS AND PHOTOS: DAVID WHITHAM

Sixteen cars lined up on the grid at Hampton Downs for round three of the championship. Drivers would be competing on the 3.8km international circuit instead of the regular 2.7km national.

Questions were being asked due to the severe weather that had hit the area the previous weekend, which had led to widespread flooding in the Auckland and Waikato regions. Thankfully, the Hampton Downs drainage system worked wonders allowing the event to go ahead.

The Central Muscle Cars lost two events over December and January, which meant that what should have been round five of seven had become three of five. This meant that for the third year in a row the category faced a shortened season and a pressure cooker points haul for drivers.

Adding to the prestige of being part of the Grand Prix was the return of Mark Holland in his Camaro — complete with its brand new engine urgently installed by Angus Fogg in the week leading up to the event. Mark, or CC as he is known in the paddock, has been diagnosed with cancer, and due to its aggressive nature Mark had to sideline himself while he and his doctors worked on a treatment plan that would allow him back in the car.

Although Mark was unable to drive himself, he took great pleasure in handing the driving duties to one of his best mates, Steve Noyer, for the first two rounds of the season. But for this particular round he was healthy enough to put his racewear on and get back behind



the wheel. Steve was more than happy to hand the car back and crew for the weekend. The new 327 engine was fresh and untested, it had not seen any track action, but Mark was looking forward to seeing what the extra ponies would do.

The round also saw a change of the regular format for the category with all track times constantly being altered due to a very tight track and TV schedule. Teams and drivers had short turnaround times between races to make any changes to the cars before being sent back out on the track.

Friday consisted of a single practice and qualifying session for the day. Out of the 16 cars entered, only 10 would take to the track for practice. And an early morning shower was testing the teams on tyre management. ➤





THE WIN WAS GARDINER'S WITH KNIGHT AND FOGG MAKING UP THE MINORS



Due to previous categories forming a dry line, teams took the gamble to go out on slicks. Andy Knight would top the practice times, ahead of championship leader Andrew Porter, with Angus Fogg slotting into third.

Rain started to fall on the Hampton Downs track and its surrounding area 20 minutes before qualifying started, and the brave decided to bolt on the wets. But some, like Angus Fogg, James Parker, and Mark Holland were more than happy to stay in their garages and start from the back of the grid for race one on Saturday.

Meanwhile Andy Knight gave his rivals a lesson in pace, securing pole ahead of Porter and Gardiner.

Saturday morning saw blue skies and sunshine over the Waikato circuit, something that Aucklanders had not seen in a while. Both of Saturday's races were held in the morning with only an hour between them. This meant damage and malfunctions would not be an easy resolve for any of the drivers or teams.

As the lights went out, Hugh Gardiner got the best start from grid spot three, launching himself past Knight and Porter to lead the pack into turn one. It wasn't all bad for Porter as he squeezed his Vertex Mustang into second ahead of Knight, only for Knight in the Camaro to take back the spot shortly afterwards.

Fogg in the J.A.Russell Mustang got the best start



out of everyone — starting 13th he made his way up to fifth within the first half of the opening lap. He then got around both Porter and Tristan Teki to slot into third behind Knight and Gardiner.

As the laps counted down, the top three pulled away from the group making it into a three-way battle between the leaders. Knight was doing everything possible to take the lead off Gardiner but he ran out of laps to get it done. The win was Gardiner's with Knight and Fogg making up the minors.

Race two and the return of the handicap format saw the slower cars starting up front, with the faster machinery playing catch up. However, due to time restraints dictated by the television schedule, the drivers only completed five of the original six allocated laps. ➤

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Newly joined member Michael Oldman was the only group two car in the field, so his Mustang led the pack away with the faster cars soon being released to try to chase him down.

As expected, the quicker cars were making moves from the back, but as the chequered flag fell it was Steve Ross in his Camaro who ended up taking the win ahead of Andrew Sinclair in the Chickadee Commodore and Steve Doughty in the Chev.

Out of the fast boys, Andy Knight crossed the line in eighth, with Gardiner in 10th and Fogg in 14th. Tristan

Teki once again silently chipped away at the points gap between him and Porter and crossed the line in ninth.

As teams arrived on Sunday morning, they were given the news that due to a track incident earlier in the morning, combined with the live coverage times for the day, race three would only be a short four-lap sprint.

Usually this third race would be a handicap, but given the shortened feature, the teams, drivers, and the committee made the decision to convert race three to a standard format, which would normally be race four. The final race would then switch to a final eight-lap handicap.

This time Fogg led the field into turn one, while Gardiner and Porter were able to jump pole sitter Knight, pushing him back into fourth. However, the shortened race did not go without incident. Contact between Tony Galbraith and Shannon Coker at turn one on the start saw Galbraith hit the wall hard and damage his Valiant. A quick recovery by officials saw the field under safety car for a lap leading to a Nascar style two-lap dash to the chequered flag.

At the restart Fogg was able to put the power down to his Mustang and pull away from Gardiner. Knight put a bold move on Porter into turn one and came out the other side in second. By turn two he pulled an inside move on Gardiner to claim second place.

The race then became a battle of horse power between Knight and Gardiner with a drag race up the hill and across the line, with only a 0.147 second difference between the two.

Shane Wigston was forced to retire three laps in with gearbox issues. This forced him out of the final race due to the quick turnaround time between races.

THE RACE THEN BECAME A BATTLE OF HORSE POWER





The J.A. Russell Mustang of Fogg also will not see the RPM reduction to the motor as the race did not complete 75 per cent race distance due to the on-track incident.

As drivers lined up for the final race of the weekend, Michael Oldham led the field away. The flag drops came quickly to send the field away into the six-lap sprint. Oldham got a little right foot heavy and gassed the car up too quickly out of a corner, sending the car into a spin in front of the field. Everyone managed to avoid the spinning Mustang and carry on their charges.

Mark Holland quickly made his way through the field to take the lead, and while the laps counted down both Fogg and Knight sliced through the field to claim second and third. Andrew Porter was having a great race in fourth until his rear wheel decided to part ways with him. Broken wheel studs were the factor that saw the Mustang not finish the race. >



ON THE PODIUM MARK AND HIS FAMILY'S SMILES SAID IT ALL



After the last few months that Mark and his family have been through he made sure his Camaro was the widest car on the track. He could see the black Mustang getting closer in his rear mirrors. However, the money spent on his new engine would prove to the field and himself that he was back and fighting fit — he crossed the line with a half a second difference ahead of Fogg and Knight. On the podium Mark and his family's smiles said it all — the victory had never tasted sweeter.

The weekend also saw a change to lead of the championship with Tristan Teki and his Batmobile Camaro quietly getting consistent results to have him leave the weekend in the lead. He is proving to everyone that it is not necessarily horsepower but consistency that can give you a title.

Teams now will recover and rebuild ahead of the farewell to Pukekohe in the last weekend in March before the final round of the season in May. **V8**





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STACKING DIMES

AMONG THE VARIOUS PROJECTS I'M BUILDING AT WORK AND TALKING ABOUT IN MY COLUMN, THE TIG WELDER IS MAYBE THE MOST USED TOOL – AND ONE THAT EVERYONE WANTS TO LEARN HOW TO USE

WORDS AND PHOTOS: TAYLOR PETERSON

I remember as a young teenager watching *Monster Garage* and Jesse James 'stacking dimes', and I think ever since then I have had a desire to master TIG welding. To me, tungsten inert gas welding is the ultimate form of welding — clean, pretty, strong, and extremely versatile. It requires a lot of user input and coordination, due to the fact you manually dab filler wire into the weld pool.

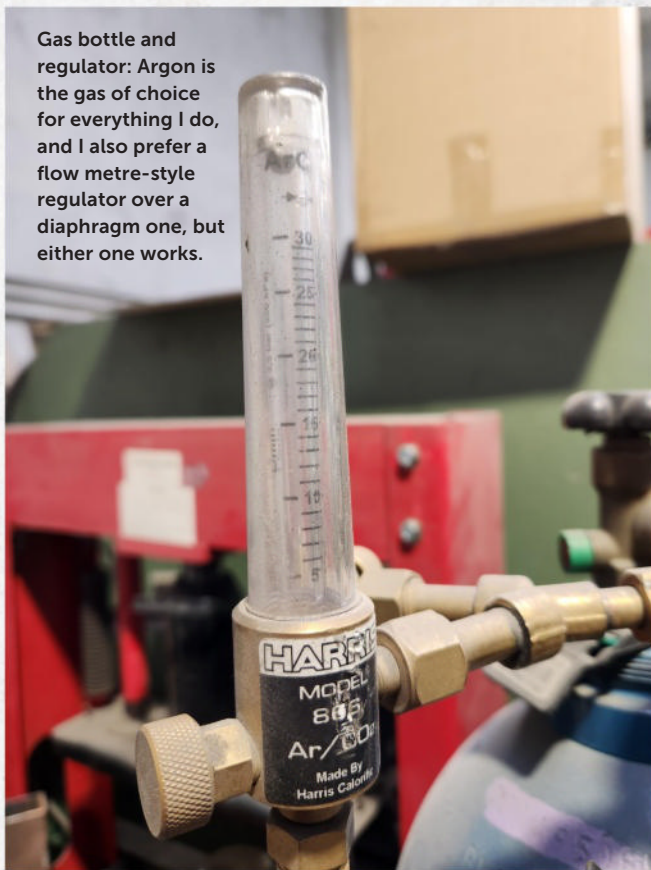
MAIN PARTS OF THE TIG WELDER

Power source/machine: This can be anything from a basic stick welder run as a scratch start TIG, or a \$15,000 Miller Dynasty inverter. To be honest, something like a Razor 200 AC/DC machine will produce 95 per cent of the quality that my Miller Dynasty does, while being in the price bracket that is suitable for the home garage.

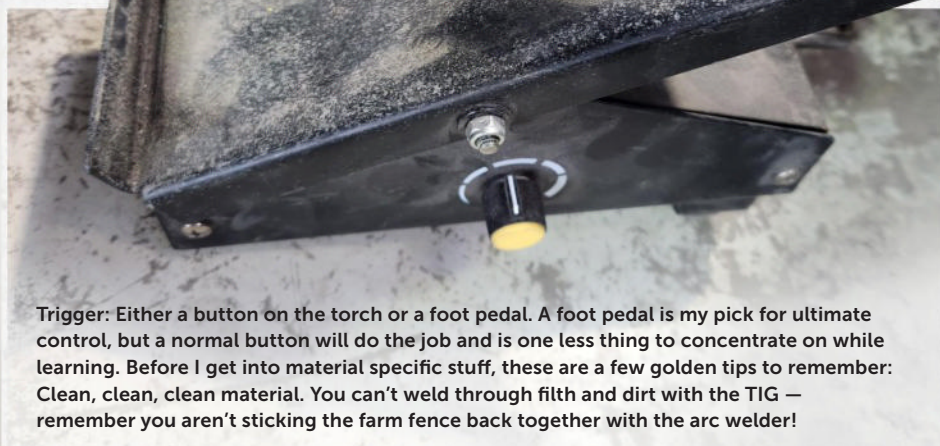
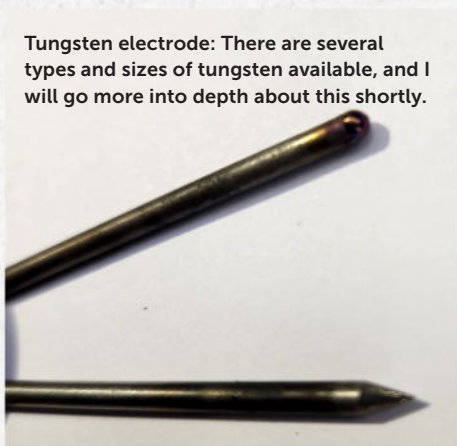


Torch: There are various options here, but a standard '26' series torch is great for most tasks. Ideally you need a couple of different collet and gas diffuser set-ups for different jobs. You will also want a 'flexi head', these let you aim the head of the torch where you need it. They are more expensive and somewhat consumable, but comfort is everything in TIG welding.

Gas bottle and regulator: Argon is the gas of choice for everything I do, and I also prefer a flow metre-style regulator over a diaphragm one, but either one works.



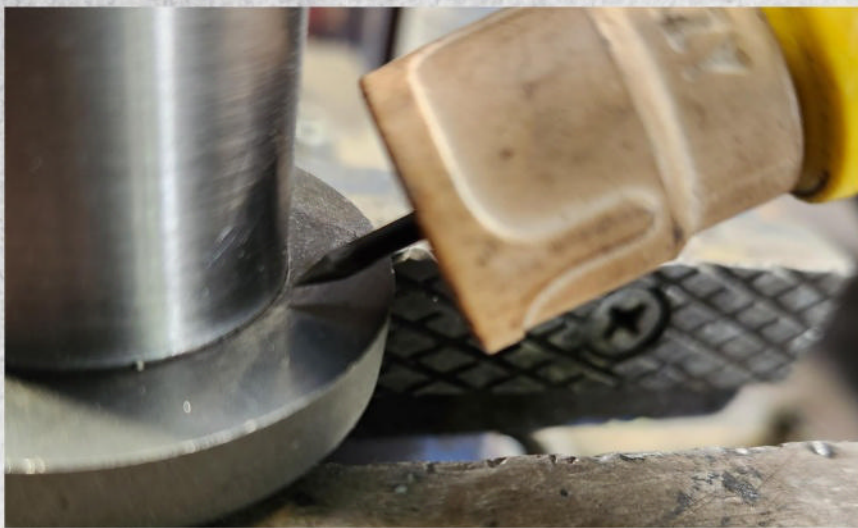
Tungsten electrode: There are several types and sizes of tungsten available, and I will go more into depth about this shortly.



Trigger: Either a button on the torch or a foot pedal. A foot pedal is my pick for ultimate control, but a normal button will do the job and is one less thing to concentrate on while learning. Before I get into material specific stuff, these are a few golden tips to remember: Clean, clean, clean material. You can't weld through filth and dirt with the TIG — remember you aren't sticking the farm fence back together with the arc welder!



Keep your tungsten sharp! If you dip it, sharpen it again. I sharpen five or so at a time to save walking to the linisher all the time. It should be sharpened to around a 30 degree angle, on a sanding belt or grinding wheel with the grind lines running along the tungsten, not across it. >



Keep your arc length (the distance from the tip of the tungsten to the weld pool) as short or close as possible as it is a big part of the control you have over the weld. The longer the arc length, the more the arc will wander and heat the material without forming a nice, clean puddle.

Visibility: Clean your helmet, fit a new lens, get glasses, basically do whatever it takes to see the puddle clearly.

Comfortable: The more comfy and relaxed you are, the nicer your weld will be. I have an office chair in the workshop, which I find equally as good for welding at my bench as I do under / on a car.

Amperage rule of thumb: 40 amps per millimetre of material. For example, if welding some 3mm alloy, 120 amps is a good starting point.

I will break the next part into four material categories appropriate to automotive fabrication — panel steel, stainless tube, aluminium, and heavy stainless / mild steel.

PANEL STEEL SET-UP

Panel steel is an interesting one, and the newest part to me. I used to think that TIG would put too much heat into the panel compared to MIG, causing distortion. While this is true, the bonus is that the weld is malleable or soft like the parent material. This means that once you have welded it with a TIG, you can planish the weld back out for a perfect join. The idea is that you just crush or release the weld back to its natural state of relaxation as it was before welding.

MACHINE SET ON DC

Tungsten type — Thoriated or E3, 2.4mm diameter sharpened to a point

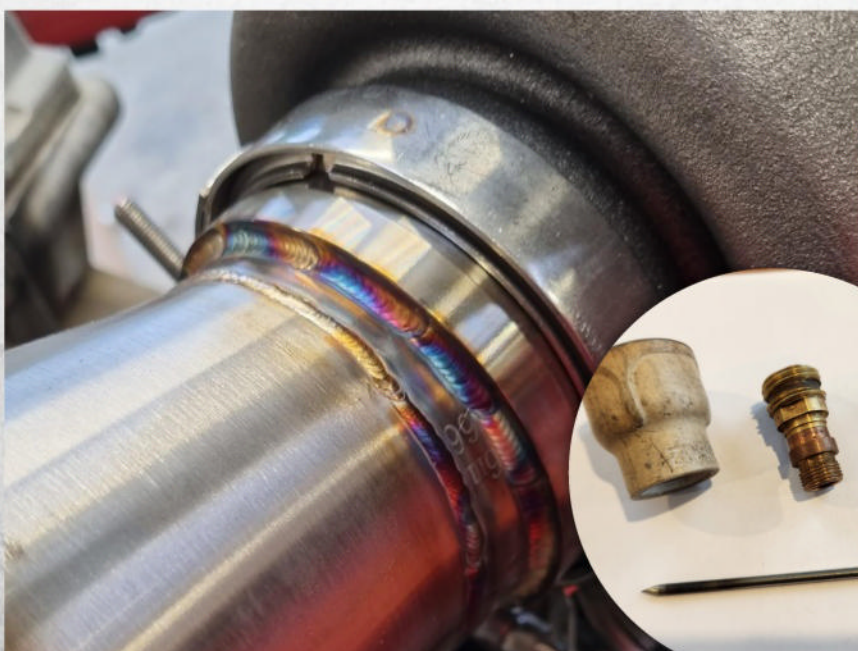
Cup type / size — Furick size 10 gas lens

Gas flow — 10-15 litres per minute

Amperage — I set it to a max of 60 amps, then use the pedal to use what I require; probably around 35 amps on 1mm steel.

Filler wire — 0.8mm ER70s MIG wire, cut off the roll

Fit up — Tight together, up to 0.5mm gap is fine.



STAINLESS STEEL SET-UP

Stainless tube is either very satisfying or very frustrating — the key is to take the time at the prep stage.

MACHINE SET ON DC

(I LIKE TO USE A SLOW PULSE OF AROUND 1.7)

Tungsten type — Thoriated or E3, 2.4mm diameter sharpened to a point

Cup type / size — Furick size 12 gas lens

Gas flow — 20-25 litres per minute, with a post flow of around 4 seconds (yes it's an insane amount of gas, but the rainbow welds are worth it)

Amperage — Set to max of 80 amps, probably use around 50-60 amps on 1.6mm wall tube

Filler wire — Either 0.9mm, or 1.2mm 316Lsi TIG wire

Fit up — Tight, then also purge for best results.



ALUMINIUM SET-UP

Aluminium is the material that I find the trickiest, probably because I came from a steel / stainless background, but it's also a material I deal with daily in automotive fabrication now.

MACHINE SET ON AC

Tungsten type – Zirconiated or E3 (notice E3 will work for all materials), either sharpened to a point or 'balled'. A pointed one will ball itself anyway, so I just start with a sharp one and let it do its thing

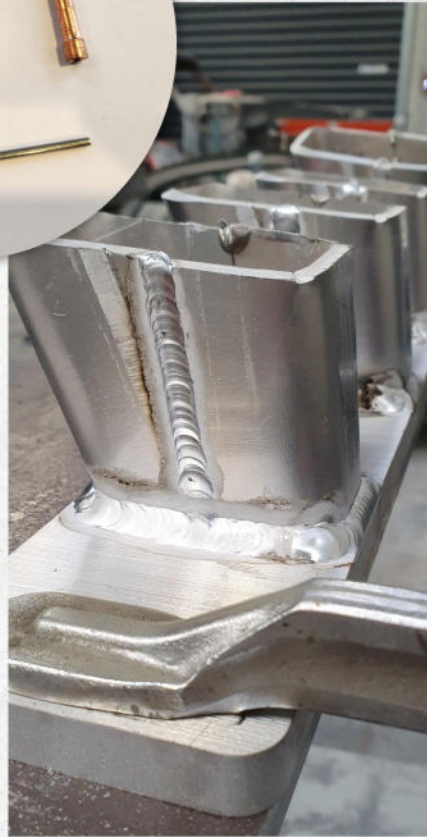
Cup type / size – Collet chuck with number 5 ceramic cup

Gas flow – 8–10 litres per minute

Amperage – Depends on material thickness, but around 40 amps per millimetre of thickness

Filler wire – 1.6mm or 2.4mm 5356 does 90 per cent of my jobs, and the odd cast aluminium job requires a change to 4043 wire

Fit up – Thin tube such as intercooler piping will be done with a tight fit up, but anything 3mm or more will need a 'V' prep with a root gap for penetration.



HEAVY STEEL OR STAINLESS STEEL SET-UP

The easiest material to TIG weld is 3mm or thicker, and this is probably a good place to start while learning.

MACHINE SET ON DC

Tungsten type – Thoriated or E3

Cup type / size – Furick 10 or 12 gas lens

Gas flow – 15–20 litres per minute

Amperage – Roughly 40 amps per millimetre. Technically this means that once you get to 5mm material thickness, a 200 amp welder is maxed out. I have found that 200 amps will get you up to 10mm material with the right preparation and travel speed

Filler wire – 1.6mm ER70s for mild steel, 316Lsi for stainless steel, or if you want to join mild steel to stainless go for 309Lsi wire.



That probably covers most of the basics, and will get you set up with the correct torch, consumables, and filler wires. The next part is simply practice — it takes a whole lot of torch time to get good. I'm still learning everytime I weld. Remember to take your time on the preparation and set up, and enjoy what you are doing. Your best welds will happen when you are relaxed and comfortable.

HELLBAKER IN THE BUILD

WHAT'S UNDER CONSTRUCTION AROUND THE COUNTRY



HELLBAKER

If the list we have of new builds that Kiwis have in their garages around the country is any indication, we're in for a great year with some truly exceptional cars to showcase. In case you didn't find the V10 in the '68 Charger outrageous enough, here's another one for you: a 2019 Dodge Charger Hellcat engine producing 700 horsepower, installed in a 1937 Studebaker

Dictator — is that the most ridiculous sentence we have ever written?

In modern terms, a restomod is what Nelson resident Tim Miller was searching for, but in Tim's eyes, he was simply creating a hot rod by fusing the old and the new, much like they did in the early days of the hot rod movement. While the hunt first started for a body, Tim had always

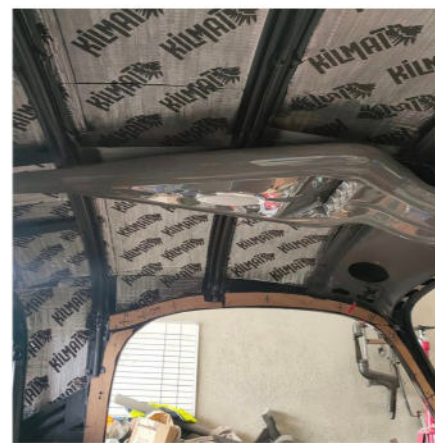
wanted a Willys Coupe, yet finding one suitable was proving to be a challenge.

It was brought to his attention that a '37 Studebaker Dictator looked very similar, and to Tim's surprise it did. Moving his focus to finding one, he reached out to Studebaker car clubs in America, finding one in okay-ish condition out of Savannah, Georgia. Alongside the Studebaker, a crashed yet complete 2016 Dodge Charger Hellcat was sourced out of New York, with both cars landing in NZ in 2019.

After joining the Nelson Hot Rod Club, Tim met the amiable Jeff Marshall, who he later learned was well known in the South Island hot rod community after moving from Balclutha to Nelson a number of years ago. Jeff has been building hot rods since he was 17 years old. A friendship was forged and a desire to help out on Tim's build, but the duo had their work cut out for them.

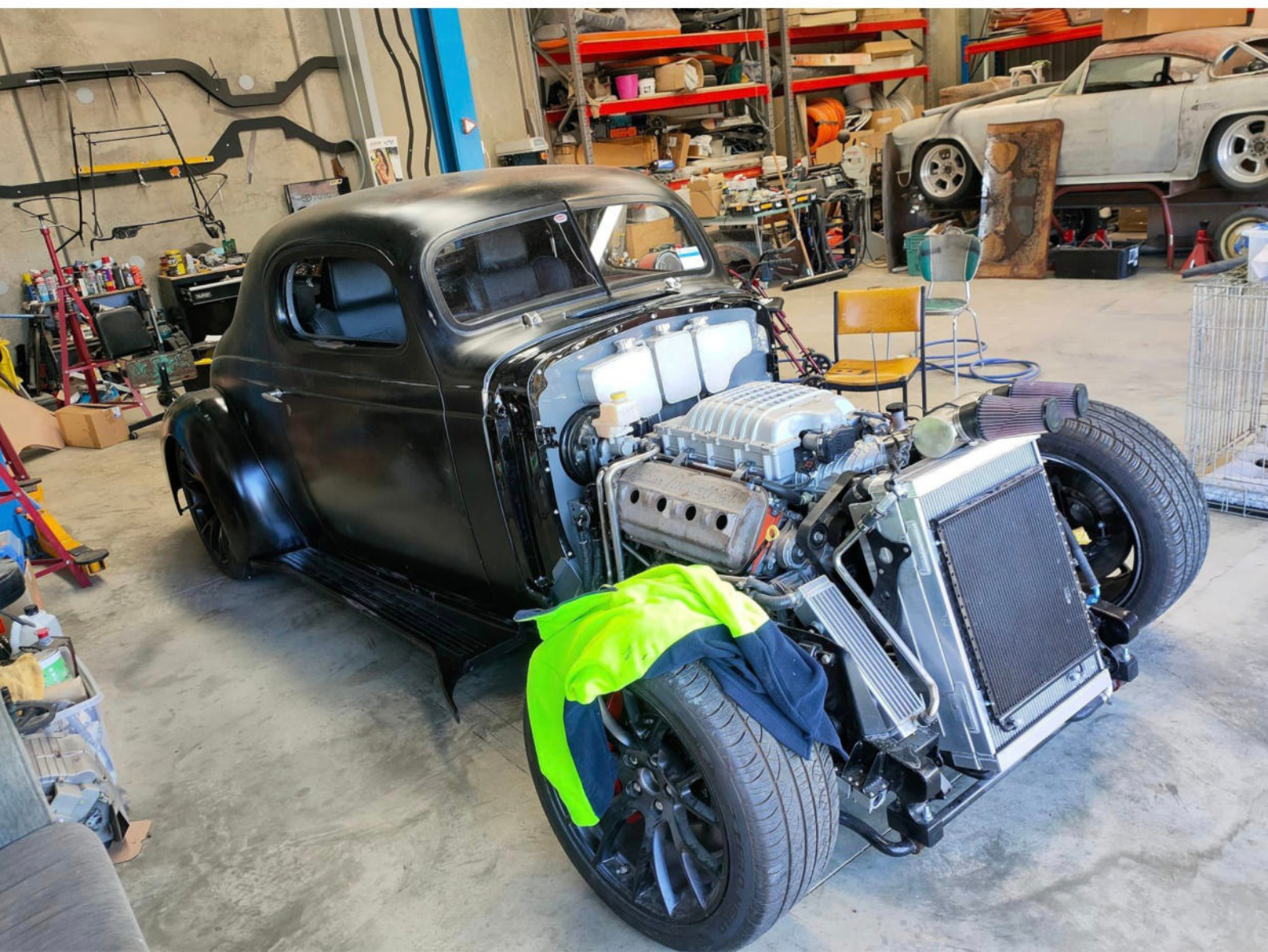
Tim says Jeff was the master in the build and he was the apprentice. It kicked off with building a new chassis that was to follow the same shape and fixing points as the factory Studebaker one, but with added fixings to accommodate the very interesting and different cantilever suspension, using the Dodge Charger Independent rear end with QA1 shocks. While the front uses the suspension set-up from a C5 Corvette, as the Dodge assembly wouldn't fit or work, the rest of the chassis was built to accommodate the 6.2L supercharged Hemi and 8-speed 8HP XF automatic transmission out of the donor Dodge Charger.





Jam-packing all the modern comforts of the late model donor was no easy feat for the team, but as Tim says, having comforts like power steering, air conditioning, fuel injection, disc brakes, and even a reversing camera just make modern-day hot rodding more enjoyable — did we mention it's capable of 700hp!

The original factory-black paintwork has been repainted then sanded back and clear coated, giving it a unique and stylish look, and Tim has no plans to paint it a colour yet. Tim says he plans to install a set of Detroit Steel steelies, but the late model Hellcat wheels are growing on him in the meantime, so the final decision on wheels is still up in the air. There is plenty more to do on this modern-day hot rod, but Tim and Jeff say that it's full steam ahead and we should see its completion as early as April/May. [V8](#)



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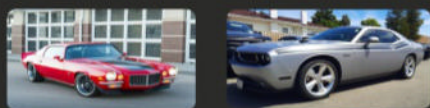
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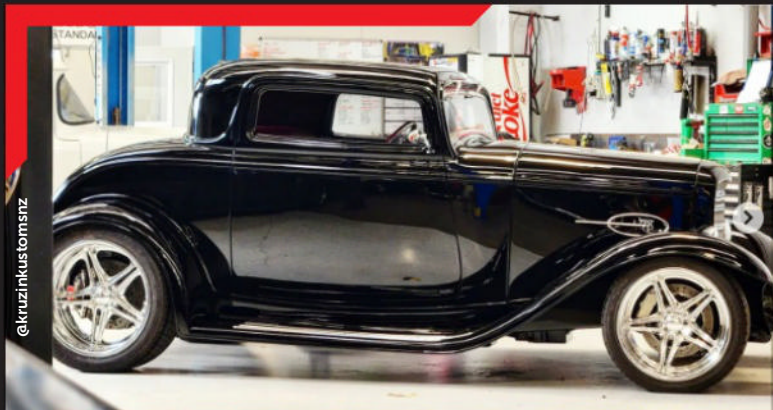
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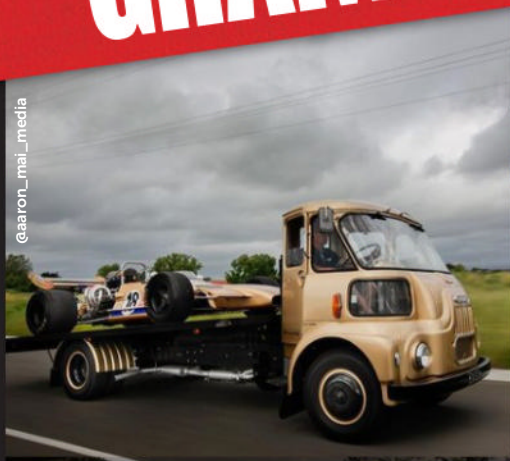
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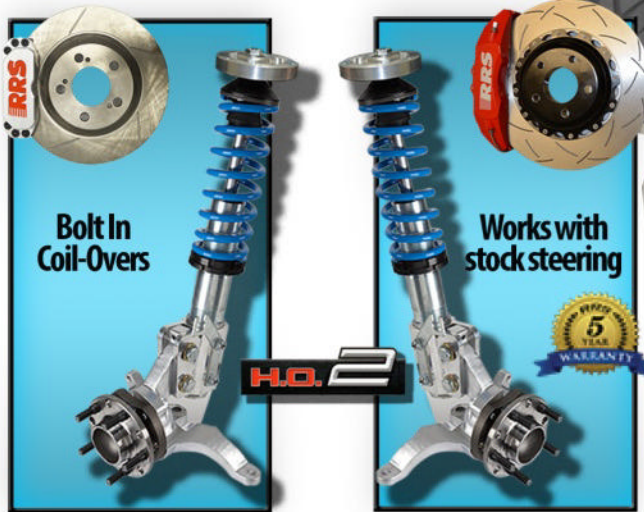
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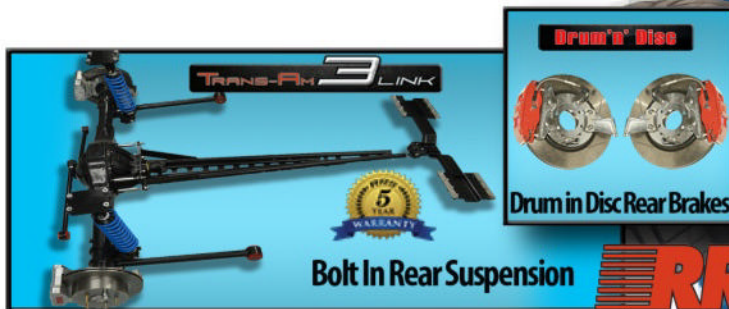
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